



TUMULT IN THE SOVIET UNION
Workers must take driver's seat to save the USSR—Page 4

The Freedom Socialist

Voice of Revolutionary Feminism

February-April 1991

Volume 12, Number 3

(\$1.00 outside U.S.) 75¢

Bush ignites global war

Radical challenge to U.S. death dealers can stop the carnage

Twenty-four hours before D-day the world antiwar movement detonated. Hundreds of thousands of people marched, chanted, rallied, spoke out, and fought cops on January 14 in New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Seattle, the Bay Area, and in Berlin, Turin, and Amman. Thousands took over San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge in the morning. Another thousand rallied in downtown Oakland at noon. In Chicago, 6,000 closed the Loop, burned U.S. flags, and battled police.

Six thousand in Turin. Ten thousand in the Jordanian capital. In Berlin, protesters fought riot police outside U.S. military headquarters shouting "U.S.—international genocide agency!"

Are you listening, Washington? Everyone knows the U.S. has unilaterally opted for slaughter in Saudi Arabia—to control the goddamned oil, to reassert hegemony over the Mideast and Third World, and for war profits galore.

How to build an antiwar movement. Bush, given carte blanche by Congress, went to war. How do we stop him?

By bringing home to all the U.S. people that the Mideast war is no less a war against them; that their children will die for Exxon and war profiteers; that war deficits will speed economic collapse, unemployment, homelessness, and gutting of health, education and welfare; that capitalism, powered by profits sucked out of oil wells, is the cause of this war, and that it must be sent to the wrecking yard and junked.

We need a **democratic** antiwar movement. All ideas, opinions and programs, radical and not-so-radical, must be openly discussed and voted on. This collective process will produce the deepest understanding of what our tasks are and, on that basis, what plan of attack is best suited to end the war.

The aim? To stop this war **and** the system that profits from militarization and carnage, and replace it with a system of workers' control of industry and shared wealth. In short, socialism.

Takes two to screw it up. It wouldn't be hard to build a viable antiwar movement. Just add democracy and stir. People are ready to see the good sense of radical solutions. Yet anyone interested in making things easy for Bush as he drives into war could steal a leaf from the current antiwar leadership.

They've split into two factions nationally, and local organizing in major cities reflects this split. The first faction runs the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East. This group, formed in August after Iraq's invasion, is headed by Workers World Party (WWP), and co-led/decorated by former U.S.

Attorney General Ramsey Clark. The Coalition launched the first major national antiwar protest last October 20.

The second faction heads the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, which includes such groups as the National Mobilization for Survival, CISPES, International Jewish Peace Union, Women Strike for Peace, the

banner for all other differences. Such issues as sanctions are precisely what should be democratically thrashed out and clarified, making for deeper, more clear-eyed unity.

Turf wars surely enter into the division. But the political differences provide clues to understanding the basic orientation of each faction and the



Rainbow Coalition, and Left groups such as Socialist Action who can't get along with WWP.

Two factions, divided movement. The Coalition scheduled a national march in Washington, D.C., January 19. The Campaign heads for the capital January 26.

Grassroots activists are puzzled and angry at the split. They reason correctly that a unified march would be far more effective. Why the two different dates?

There **are** political differences between the Campaign and the Coalition. The Campaign condemns Iraq equally with the U.S. in this conflict and supports United Nations sanctions against Iraq as the alternative to war. The Coalition refuses to take a position on the invasion and opposes sanctions, saying that the U.S. incursion is the overriding evil and that sanctions are but war by other means. The Coalition's Pontius-Pilate-like refusal to condemn the invasion is inexcusable, though they're correct about the sanctions and in identifying the main evil.

Still, say the grass roots, the demand that the U.S. stay out of the war is the basis for movement unity. Since both the Campaign and Coalition agree on this point, there should be room under one

methods of each in maintaining control.

Two clues right off: both groups are adamantly opposed to open socialist participation in the movement (closet socialists are OK), and both censor free discussion to try to ensure that socialist ideas are locked out.

Sleight-of-hand. The Campaign condemns Iraq along with the U.S. and supports the sanctions—positions at odds with antiwar objectives.

This plague-on-both-the-U.S.-and-Iraq stance can and is being used by Washington's warmakers as back-door justification for going in. After all, if the

invasion is to be condemned, it must be reversed. The Campaign proposes no alternative to Bush's solution except UN peace efforts. This is the same UN that "authorized" U.S. force after January 15, that was bribed and bludgeoned by Bush into calling for sanctions, that is the fig leaf for U.S. war efforts. What "peace" would the UN offer the Mideast that wouldn't maintain the U.S. grip, deepen the tensions, and lead to deadlier U.S. incursions while giving them cover?

The Campaign begs the question of who is primarily responsible for this conflict. It ignores the significance of the history of imperialist intervention in the Mideast: the splintering of the region into pro-capitalist states and the throttling of Pan-Arab revolution thereby; the playing off of one state against another to ensure the West's control of the oil; the forced impoverishment of states such as Iraq; and the ending of privilege on the Kuwaitis and Saudis; the arming of one state against another by the U.S., British, and French; and the resulting tensions that made the Iraqi invasion only a matter of time.

Ignoring these issues, the Campaign defaults to crude Western slurs against Arabs as "violence-prone, undemocratic... Saddam is a Hitler," etc.—racist slanders that help propel the war.

A big part of the U.S. antiwar movement's job is to unite with the Arab peoples against Washington. How can we do that if we don't refute the racism—through understanding the imperialist roots of the violence?

Imperialism caused this conflict. We condemn Iraq's invasion—but as the logical outgrowth of Western capitalist control of the region. It's not Bush's dictate that can or will make things right, but the action of the Pan-Arab masses—and their anti-imperialist supporters worldwide—who would surely use the U.S. pullout to settle accounts with all bourgeois influences, including Saddam's, in the Mideast.

The Dems again. Look who runs the Campaign: people from the National Mobilization for Survival, CISPES, et al.—

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Freedom Socialist Credo

The Freedom Socialist boldly confronts and makes sense of the dizzying events shaping today's revolutionary world.


We're Marxists, Leninists, Trotskyists, feminists, humanists...we believe that all today's gigantic upheavals are links in an enormous global effort to topple the tyranny of imperialism or Stalinist bureaucratism or racist arrogance.

We hail the decisive leadership role played by people of color and by sexual and national minorities in the worldwide class struggle.

We focus on women's non-stop fight for equality which, in the final analysis, challenges every single basis on which capitalism rests. Feminism is essentially an energizing and unifying inducement to international revolutionary upsurge.

Our goal is to make these facts of life apparent. We aim to inject the socialist movement with the revitalizing ideas of Trotskyism and feminism in order to prepare it for victory in this crucial decade.

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The *Freedom Socialist* (ISSN 0272-4367) is published quarterly by the Freedom Socialist Party, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118. Phone: (206)722-2453.

Subscriptions: 1-year \$5.00 (institutions \$10.00), 2-year Supporting Sub \$25.00, 3-year Sustaining Sub \$50.00, 5-year Sponsoring Sub \$100.00. Add \$5.00 for overseas airmail. Back copies \$.75 each. Checks or money orders to *Freedom Socialist* at the address above. **In Australia:** 1-year \$6.00, airmail. Mail payment to P.O. Box 266, West Brunswick, Vic. 3055.

On the Mohawk warriors

Thank you for sending *Akwesasne Notes* the issue of the *Freedom Socialist*, the contents of which are most interesting ("Mohawk Sovereignty the Issue in Quebec," Volume 12 #2). As a news journal owned by the traditional and ancient Mohawk Nation Council we must take a stand against so-called "warriors" using a legitimate struggle to make money and mislead honest people. Our heritage is truly under attack; but by internal forces directly connected with the murder of three people, two of whom were Mohawks. Please read the enclosed *Notes* and let us know if you would work with us to promote the truth.

Doug George Kanentiio, Editor, Akwesasne Notes, Mohawk Nation (Rooseveltville, New York)

The Freedom Socialist is certainly interested in telling the truth regarding Native peoples, including exposing misleaders.

The information in Notes has prompted us to re-examine some of our early assumptions about the Mohawk warriors and we will read future issues carefully. People who once were committed to the struggle can be corrupted by the incredible pressures and enticements of living under capitalism.

However, we still think it was important to defend the warriors and the Mohawk Nation against the Canadian Army and the Quebec police assault.—Ed.

A fire in Krakow

We find the *Freedom Socialist* very interesting, especially the articles analysing our country and other former Eastern Bloc countries.

The Polish Ecological Club was established in Krakow in September 1980. It was the first independent ecological movement in the whole communist bloc.

Our green profile determines that we will always have to cooperate with socialistic movements.

We are just catching up with our work after a fire which turned the premises of our club into ruins. Almost all our possessions, including our library with the copies of your newspaper, were devoured by the fire.

The fire broke out on the second floor of "Palac pod Baranami" in the main square (Rynek Glowny) of Krakow at 5

Letters

p.m. on Tuesday the 31st of July. As you perhaps might know, "Palac pod Baranami" was the abode of the Malopolska Branch of the Polish Ecological Club, which was used for receiving visitors, organizing seminars, meetings and lectures. Despite the action of the firemen which lasted overnight until the following morning, a considerable part of the second and third floor of the building, one of the most famous in the historical square, a part of Poland's national heritage, was turned into ruins.

The lower floors, which were saved from the fire, were damaged by the water used to extinguish the fire and now also present a miserable view. Paint is peeling and the historical gypsum stuccos are falling off the walls and ceilings. Three marvelous chambers on the second floor were severely damaged. Wonderful 18th century ceilings, carpentry, doors and windows were completely burnt.

Almost all the property of the Malopolska Branch, including even a metal box with the petty cash, was completely burnt. Only part of our archives that were tightly packed at the bottom of the cabinet was saved. All the current documents, files, mail, office equipment, etc. were lost. Particularly hard is the loss of address lists and the loss of recent mail that we did not manage to answer before the fire, because it threatens with the loss of contacts. Unfortunately, the building was not insured and we will not be receiving any damages.

At the moment we are looking for new premises where we can start our work again.

The unfortunate fire must neither stop nor slow down our work!

For the time being we have moved into the premises at: Pl. Szczepanski 5; 8p., 31-011 Krakow, Poland. Here we were given the opportunity to use an office desk, typewriter, part of a cabinet and a telephone. These premises are about five minutes walking distance from our former abode.

One of this year's issues of the *Freedom Socialist* contained a very interesting article on Poland (Volume 11 #4). We would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of that once again.

Adam Gula, D. Sc., Chairman; Adam Markowski, M. Sc., Vice-Chairman Krakow, Poland

Drug wars

I am writing your paper because of an article I read in your October-December 1990 issue entitled "Drugs & Death Squads," Part III. It seems that the Drug War is on everyone's mind these days, including mine. I am what you might call a "War on Drugs buff." I have been watching what Washington has been up to, very closely, for quite some time now, from Public Law 99-570 to P.L. 100-690.

And I was very impressed when I saw that your paper mentioned H.R. 4079, but the reason I am writing you is to inform you that while H.R. 4079 may be rotting in subcommittee, the essence of the bill is now awaiting Bush's signature to become law! If you would like copies of the new Omnibus-anticrime Act, the House version is H.R. 5269, and the Senate version is S. 1970 (if you order S. 1970, you will more than likely get the unamended version). For a good summary of what the Senate passed, take a look at the Congressional transcripts for July 11th, 1990, when the bill was debated on the floor.

I hope this information is useful to you, and good luck in your cause! We're all going to need it!

**Jason Wehling
Portland, Oregon**

More drug wars

I enjoyed many of your articles but I must express the highest level of protest against the article on legalizing drugs.

Of course the U.S. has not stopped the drug trade. It's in its interest to keep communities divided, frightened, disorganized in face of rising unemployment and right wing agendas. Cocaine, along with meth and ice, *cause paranoia* and *increase* a tendency to violence in users. In a community of lots of folks unemployed and already pissed off, its volatility is *not* caused by its being illegal. Can you imagine the advertising and competition that would go along with U.S. capitalism legally getting in on the cocaine trade?

Please reconsider. People are dying not just from the trade—but the addiction.

**Mabie Settlege
Los Angeles, California**

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs.

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EMBATTLED NICARAGUA
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Fund for Feminist Seditious*

*'si-dish'en, noun: conduct or language inciting to rebellion against the authority of the state.

\$50,000 Goal in Sight...

...as Radical Women strives to finance a socialist feminist tour of five Eastern European countries, publish documents, and carry on its international organizing.

Give Today to the Radical Women Fund Drive!

Please send donations to Radical Women National Office, Valencia Hall, 523-A Valencia, San Francisco, Calif. 94110. Call 415-864-1278.



Journalist exiled from newsroom for gay rights organizing

Defense committee rallies to win reinstatement



Sandy Nelson

Workplace McCarthyism reigns at the Tacoma *Morning News Tribune*, one of Washington state's major daily papers. Sandy Nelson, award-winning *MNT* journalist and political activist, is its first victim.

Nelson has written for the *MNT* for seven years, most recently as education reporter. In her hours off, she fights for abortion rights and Gay rights through coalitions like The Committee to Protect Tacoma Human Rights, which she helped found. She's also a stalwart in anti-racist and other civil rights campaigns, a strong unionist, and organizer for Tacoma Radical Women.

In August 1990, *MNT* management yanked Nelson from her reporting beat and exiled her to a non-writing posi-

tion on the copy desk because of her work on Proposition One, a Tacoma Lesbian/Gay rights ordinance on the November ballot.

"Ethics" as weapon. *MNT* Managing Editor Norm Bell, hatchman in the case, says that off-duty work on issues such as Proposition One clouds journalists' ability to write objectively. He invoked an "ethics" code, governing what writers may and may not do on off-time, to justify banishing Nelson.

Trouble is, *MNT* doesn't have an ethics code; that's one of the items management has put on the table for negotiation in contract talks with Nelson's union, Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild Local 82. A contract hasn't been reached—management has stonewalled settlement for four long years; so Bell's move is a unilateral management attempt to grab total "ownership" over employees' time, a grab in keeping with *MNT*'s refusal to negotiate a fair contract with Local 82.

Behind "objectivity." Bell's notion that political activism skews a reporter's objectivity is garbage.

What is objectivity in news reporting, if not presenting to the reader facts attending a particular issue or event? And who better to communicate those facts than people involved? Journalism is enhanced, not compromised, when reporters are active in political and

community affairs.

Nelson's wide-ranging interests, known for years to management, undoubtedly contributed to the quality of her *MNT* reporting, which has won her national awards and, in January 1990, an "excellent" performance rating.

An objective reporter reading these facts would decide something smells.

A good investigative reporter, seeking the source of the smell, would look closely at the state of labor/management relations today. She or he would be instantly struck by the near-universal management drive to reduce employment via union-busting, forced drug testing, loyalty oaths, "ethics" codes... Digging further, our reporter would find the motive—a desire in these hard times to up the profit rate by slashing labor costs. That means destroying workers' ability to organize.

It surely means silencing the activists. It's no accident that Nelson was targeted: as a socialist, she's a danger to workplace McCarthyites. As a lesbian she's an affront to "pro-family" advertisers whose dollars management chases like donkeys scramble for carrots.

So, Nelson says, "I'm suddenly a victim of the very discrimination I've been fighting."

Set up. Bell has stated that one reason for Nelson's transfer was that he was worried about how Nelson's identification as a reporter/activist would look. If that's the case, why was it *MNT*

management that paraded her as such?

Here's how it happened: *MNT* allowed Nelson to adjust her work schedule in order to attend the Women of Vision U.S./Soviet Women's Conference in Tacoma last July. In her biographical information for the conference, Nelson identified herself as "reporter, Tacoma," among other things. She consciously chose not to call herself a reporter for the *MNT* so as not to involve the paper in her politics.

But in an *MNT* article on the conference, Nelson was labeled as "*Morning News Tribune* reporter." Immediately after, Bell called Nelson into his office and bam!—she was no longer a writer, no longer had a byline, and was forced into a new position with which she was unfamiliar. Plus, her work hours were changed to evenings and weekends, the time when she would meet with other activists to do her political work.

As Nelson says, "It was the company...that made these connections. Now they're punishing me for it."

Bell said that the transfer would be reviewed after Proposition One came to a vote in November. But when Nelson and her union representative met with Bell after the campaign, he delivered an ultimatum: to get her old job back, she would have to cease her political activities completely.

Write on! To get Nelson reinstated as a writer, she and her union, Pacific

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Rank and file fight purge of socialists from labor council

AFS-CME Local 2083-C, the Seattle Public Library clerks' union, announced December 17 that Kim Davison and Karrie Peterson lost a heated election for their former positions as delegates to the King County Labor Council (KCLC).

They should never have had to run in the first place.

Davison and Peterson, two gutsy young socialist feminists, were dumped from their KCLC positions in July 1990 by their local's Executive Board, in a direct assault on union democracy.

Rank-and-file leaders of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees), Davison and Peterson are fighters for civil rights, opponents of contract givebacks, and enemies of union bureaucrats who build careers on conciliation with management and sellouts of their members.

The 2083-C Executive Board said the views of the two weren't "mainstream enough" for the labor movement. The board castigated their refusal to make "alliances with people in power" on the KCLC and questioned Davison about the political affiliations of council delegates she worked with.

The KCLC struggle takes place as recent militant strikes across the country show workers' eagerness to settle scores from the union-busting '80s. The attempt to drive Davison and Peterson out of leadership is a bid by opportunists and cowards to "clean up" the house of labor, to head off the influ-

ence of radicals before it takes hold in a re-awakening movement.

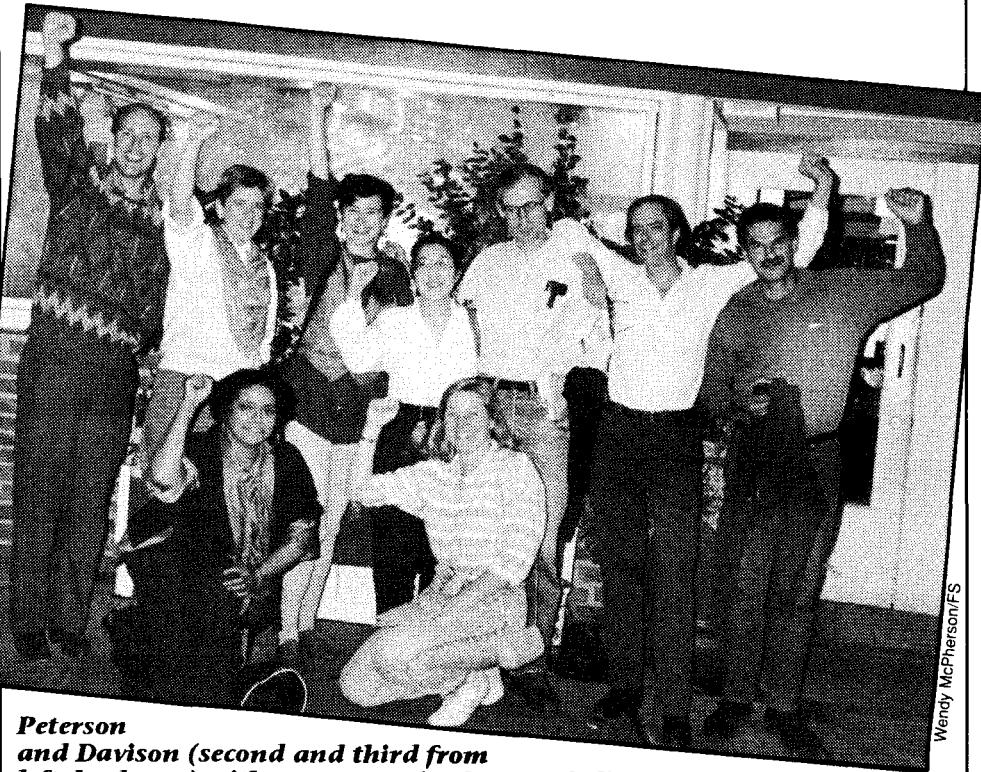
Radicals vs. bureaucrats.

Davison and Peterson put themselves out of the "mainstream" by standing up for labor's second-class citizens: people of color, women, lesbians and gays, and radicals, the workers traditionally repudiated and ignored by labor's mis-leaders.

Peterson helped win a KCLC endorsement and speaker for Seattle's 1990 lesbian/gay pride rally. She won respect by building labor support for privacy rights in the Freeway Hall Case, in which an ex-member has gone after the Freedom Socialist Party's minutes and membership lists in court.

Davison and Peterson have lent unstinting aid to unions on strike. They called on officials in the trades to end racism and sexism in apprenticeship programs. And, with others, they have rallied Washington State Labor Council delegates to send a strong pro-abortion rights resolution to the AFL-CIO over the heated objection of officials who claim abortion isn't a labor issue.

Fighting for the right positions often meant going to the mat with those KCLC and state labor bureaucrats who do their damndest to steer union activists away from issues such as affirmative action and abortion rights. The functionaries want "peace" and "partnership" with management. And so, despite lip service to the contrary, they



Wendy McPherson/FS

Peterson and Davison (second and third from left, back row) with supporters in the Seattle library union.

must suppress the concerns of labor's worst-treated citizens in order to hold on to their positions as the "middle caste," the privileged mediators between bosses and workers.

Power grab. Says Peterson, "Our union's E-Board wanted to hobnob with, not challenge, the council bureaucrats. That's why they dumped us

and appointed themselves.

"They could never win rank-and-file support with an open attack. They wouldn't challenge us on our stands in the council. So they had to red bait us, question people's outside affiliations."

News of Davison's and Peterson's unceremonious replacement stunned people throughout the labor move-

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Collapse of the Soviet Union? Only workers' revolt can stave it off

Gorbachev, hat in hand, begging food from Bush and the bankers. Perestroika? Bleached bones in a pauper's unmarked grave.

The people in Moscow are hungry and sullen, all the grand prospects of the past five years gone. The reforms, the hope of the market—litter in the streets, buried in winter's vast drifts.

Hardline Stalinists back from the dead are up on their hind legs roaring for Order. Gorbachev grabs for a lifeline: the KGB, the Army, the threat of presidential dictatorship to quell the rebellious republics.

Pro-market "democrats" and break-away nationalists fall back in dismay. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, would-be architect of a junior partnership with the U.S. in global affairs, resigns, decrying Gorbachev's drift toward the hard line.

Gorbachev a dictator-savior of the sinking Soviet Union? What else is left for him? His dream of installing a "regulated" market economy is in tatters. Reality has posed hard questions: how can market anarchy co-exist with economic planning and centralized control, and to what degree? How can one "restructure" the USSR's economy, and with it the socio-political structure, without destroying the bureaucracy?

How can he reform an edifice so shot through with repression, waste, deceit, and lies—one which, even purged of these bureaucratic fruits, ultimately conflicts with the laws of the market because of its planned character?

Gorbachev has tinkered here and there with privatization and price controls, hoping that market "correctives" would jog the economy, while allowing some form of continued control from the top. Inevitably he has fallen back, unable to locate the key to peaceful transformation.

He used glasnost to try to force that change through—and unleashed a Pandora's box of devils clamoring for capitalism outright, and even for dismemberment of the Union into a federation of capitalist republics.

Glasnost has also unmuzzled Soviet workers, and they too have cried out, but not for the price hikes and job loss the market would bring. They want the good life, political freedom, material and cultural abundance—the promise of socialism fulfilled.

They have stood fast against all capitalist-style encroachments and perestroika has died.

But the old command system is likewise gasping its last. The house is in ruins with no shelter in sight, and the USSR is poised on the lip of destruction.

The creaky balance wheel.

Winter brought a political dogfight. Fighting for the upper hand are the Stalinist hardliners (momentarily ascendant), the pro-marketeters, and the workers. Straddling these forces is Gorbachev, failed reformer. No matter that he embodies more the vacuum of power than power itself. Who else is strong enough now to step in and fill up the vacuum?

"Democrats" cling to him yet as the "international guarantor" of International Monetary Fund (IMF) credits, even as hardliners cheer his toughening stance. The workers have yet to consolidate the strength to topple the Kremlin.

Without Gorbachev at this point, chaos is likely. Everyone feels this and fears it. Who is prepared to say with assurance they'd survive?

The West's dilemma. Foreboding grips the West as well. Europe

market "correctives" to put food on the table, and their opposition to price hikes and layoffs.

The miners' strikes in 1989 foreshadowed a general struggle for workers' democracy. The miners wanted to take over production and remove the bureaucrats from government. They stood together as equals across national lines—a rock-bottom challenge to both pro-capitalist secessionists and the Great Russian chauvinists in Moscow.

Meanwhile, Soviet working women



Peter Turnley/News Week

quakes at the prospect of Soviet upheaval—and refugees—spilling westward. Bush sends a billion inadequate dollars in aid and strains for ways to prop Gorbachev—hoping it all can be done on the cheap, before Citibank goes under and war with Iraq chews up what's left of the U.S. economy.

It's been Gorbachev that the West has banked on to serve as the conduit for capitalism into the USSR. He "ended the Cold War" and "liberated" the peoples of Eastern Europe from Stalinism. He appeared to embody the hope of the world for orderly transition to "post-Cold War" prosperity and peace.

The bankers took note: at home he was the Captain steering the ship westward through uncharted shoals. And if the ship buckled and sprung leaks, and the people jammed in the lower decks began to rage, there was no one else ready to take over. Yeltsin? The Premier of Russia's 500-day march to market has already been scuttled, and with it his chance to succeed to the helm.

Now Gorbachev founders: the market has come knocking, the republics have risen up, the workers have said no, the old system has withered, the shelves have remained bare. The genie, out of the bottle, has taken aim at the Good Man of Glasnost.

And so Our Man in the Kremlin reaches out—to the KGB, the Stalinist Old Guard, and Order.

Gorbachev, a Stalin reborn? What must the White House think?

Hope. Better Stalin than workers in charge in the Soviet Union; that's what George Bush thinks. It's workers who have stymied the capitalists' return to the East. Witness their vocal bitterness, especially the women's, at the failure of

Hunting food in Moscow (above). A worried Gorbachev (right), his reforms in ashes, smuggled closer to conservatives this winter. First fruits of the new alliance: Soviet Army repression in Latvia and Lithuania.

Boris Yurchenko/AP

have haunted the bureaucracy. Women have to stand in the long lines outside the empty stores, work the lowest-paid jobs, are most threatened by lay-offs, homelessness, and starvation. And they bear the brunt of a system that spits on the welfare of children.

Women are workers, consumers, mothers, unpaid domestics, insulted and ill-used antipodes to the bureaucrats. In them the hopes and demands of the Soviet Union's oppressed find fullest expression.

Problem and solution. The October Revolution of 1917 was supposed to do away with privilege and parasites. But the Soviet state, besieged by the West, denied resources and technology, hence mired in the poverty of a thousand years, proved unable to fulfill the revolution's mandate.

No one can liberate humanity on the basis of squalor. As we explained in the *Freedom Socialist*, Vol. 12, No. 2:

Want provided for the "liberation" of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the early '20s, enabling it to take hold of the state as a gendarme bringing "order" to the mad scramble for existence.

As policeman, the bureaucrat stood first in line for life's good things. And so, despite the crying need for change, above all revolution in the West, the Stalinist watchwords became "don't upset the applecart,"... "peaceful coexistence" with capitalism, and "socialism in one country," the USSR.

The bureaucrats failed to conjure away the imperialist threat...and allowed the West to retain the world's wealth while the Soviet Union stumbled along in tatters for decades.

Tatters and rags—and a police state to forestall revolt against the bureaucracy that had betrayed the revolution. A grim parody of socialism, this Stalinist paradise. And no alternative whatever to imperialism.

Trotsky predicted that if the workers didn't oust the bureaucrats, the bureaucrats would sell out to the capitalists. And along came Gorbachev, and behind him the Yeltsins...

Cleaning them all out is the job of

the workers.

The workers' fundamental task—to realize that poverty and debasement are **all** that can come from "socialism in one country" and "coexistence" with the West, and that for the good life to be theirs world capitalism must perish as surely as Stalinism.

They are headed toward a clash with both bureaucrats **and** bosses, the bad apples East and West. This means an international conflict and the need to make common cause with the workers of the U.S. and Europe.

Western workers are faced with war, depression, and fascist jackboots in the corridors of power—and they'll respond to Soviet workers' initiatives. How long can the bad apples stand against their combined power?

We're talking about a world socialist revolution, food on the table, and the good life for everyone. □

—ROBERT CRISMAN

...jobs vs. ecology

from page 24
sand timber jobs were lost in Washington state alone.

This happened primarily because the companies, greatly assisted by automation, are managing to do more with fewer workers. The newest mechanical marvel is the Treepower FB-1, which can cut down trees 20 inches thick

while moving up a 70-degree slope.

Additionally, more raw logs are being sent abroad to be processed. Louisiana Pacific closed a California mill and moved it to Mexico—where LP pays the workers 87 cents an hour.

How much time left? It appears the corporations are close to clearcutting themselves out of business. Most of the old forests are gone; the tree-farm factories planted to replace them are far from adequate substitutes in either quality or quantity; thousands upon thousands of industry jobs have

disappeared forever during a decade of peak production.

Today, a last-ditch battle to save what's left of the forest has been joined, symbolized by the controversy over the spotted owl. The corporations, thirsty to hack the remaining forest to pulp, are trying to make the owl the scapebird for the dire straits of that other imperiled species, the logger.

If woods, owl, and logger are to be saved, environmentalists and timber workers are going to have to see through the bosses' "jobs vs. owls" tactic and make common cause against

the corporate rape of the forests. □

—ANDREA BAUER

The final installment of this two-part series on the spotted owl controversy will look at the question from the perspective of those who work in the forest and include an interview with logger Steve Goodman. It will examine the role of labor officialdom in meeting the crisis, discuss the environmental movement, and explore how the future of timber-industry workers can be protected without sacrificing the owl and the last of the ancient forests.

Part one

On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State

by Stephen Durham & Susan Williams, M.D.



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Ramon Nueva Imagen/Impact Visuals



Parte uno

Sobre la Naturaleza del Estado de Nicaragua

About This Document

"On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State" was adopted at the 1988 FSP National Convention as a concise and accurate analysis of the hard-won gains and unfinished tasks of the Sandinista revolution. The resolution concluded that only by moving forward to replace the rule of capital by consolidation of a workers' state could the FSLN defend and extend the revolution against imperialist encirclement and internal bourgeois sabotage.

The February 1990 electoral defeat of the FSLN confirmed—in the negative—our assessment.

In 1986, the authors, writing on behalf of the FSP National Committee, began a two-year investigation into all aspects of the Nicaraguan revolution. What, exactly, was the nature of this amazing, seemingly unprecedented upheaval that had captured the world's imagination? The authors felt that only by studying the revolution in depth and in its development could they come to know it, and thereby contribute with maximum effectiveness to its defense against world reaction.

They wanted to understand the contradiction between its democratic, essentially anti-capitalist dynamic and the Sandinistas' consistently accommodationist stance vis-à-vis imperialism.

A host of issues threw the contradictory character of the revolution into sharp relief: the questions of "mixed" economy and "pluralist" democracy; the status of women and the Atlantic Coast Indians and Creoles within the revolution. Where, in the truth of these relations, could the nature and trajectory of the revolution be discerned?

Drawing on Marxism, the science of revolution, and on the lessons of anti-capitalist rebellion in the 19th and 20th centuries, the authors realized that understanding this revolution entailed launching an objective and exhaustive investigation into the character of the Nicaraguan state and the changes it had undergone since the 1979 insurrection.

What made an investigation of the state necessary? Because the state—the web of institutions that hold civil society in place: the military, police, courts, government bureaucracy, school system, etc.—is the instrument through which one class rules over society in pursuit of its own interests, repressing all other classes. The state is the fount of all social power so long as classes exist.

In our day, only one of two contending, irreconcilably opposed classes can hold state power, the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. A state is either a workers' or a capitalist state.

Given the place of the state in human affairs, the paramount importance of the question of the nature of Nicaragua's post-revolutionary state—capitalist or proletarian? in harmony with or antagonistic to the fundamentally anti-capitalist thrust of the revolution?—is obvious.

Anti-capitalist revolutions live or die depending on whether or not they bring state power into accord with the economic and social interests of the working class. It is first of all a matter of self-defense: in a revolutionary upheaval such as Nicaragua's, the oppressed workers and peasants openly challenge imperialist domination and bourgeois home rule. The challenge inevitably provokes military and economic counterattack. A strong

defense is needed, and the necessary defense weapon is the workers' state—essentially the self-armed and organized workers and allies among the peasantry—which unabashedly defends their economic and social interests against their former oppressors.

As noted, this resolution concluded, after investigation, that the revolution had not yet thrown off the yoke of capital.

In 1989, the authors took this document to Nicaragua to test their assessment against what they saw and experienced in the land of the revolution itself. They discussed the document's contents and conclusion with FSLN leaders and rank and file, women, unionists, lesbians and gays, youth, Nicaraguan Trotskyists, and Miskitos and Creoles on the Atlantic Coast. They were able to overcome thereby the lack of access in the U.S. to critical material on the political questions that spell life or death to the revolution.

Upon their return to the U.S. they wrote: "A defining characteristic of the people we talked with was pride: pride in overthrowing Somoza; pride in their ten-year struggle against U.S. aggression; pride in the FSLN government—their government, installed by them, and in power today by virtue of their support.

"Pride sustains the spirit. But spirit is not indestructible. The heady post-insurrection days are gone, and many Nicaraguans are becoming worn down, disenfranchised, demoralized, disengaged, as the Sandinistas try the impossible, to reconcile mass democratic aspirations with the



tyrannical rule of an economic system still run predominately by and for capitalists."

The Sandinistas' defeat in the February elections constituted a giant step toward the actual dismantling of the revolution. The defeat is rooted in the FSLN's failure to mobilize workers and poor peasants for the creation of a proletarian state. This failure, born of the Sandinistas' desire to co-exist with and conciliate international capital, resulted in harsh deprivation, especially for urban wage-earners, women, the impoverished Atlantic Coast peoples, the poor peasants. The failure, inevitably, eroded support among all of them for the revolution itself.

Deprivation has increased under Chamorro, as has resistance to her government.

The need to organize defense of the Nicaraguan revolution is more urgent than ever today. A U.S. invasion to smash all resistance to capital remains a threat. We believe that the analysis contained in this document is an important tool for building this defense, both here in the U.S. and among anti-imperialists in Nicaragua and throughout the world.

The resolution will be published in two installments. An Afterward will outline our perspective of ongoing developments and the possibility for revolutionary rebirth and victory.

I. Backdrop

Nine years ago, in 1979, the Nicaraguan people mounted a thrilling challenge to Yankee hegemony in Central America and overthrew the Somoza dictatorship.

The small Republic of Nicaragua seems at first glance an unlikely threat to the U.S. of A. Until the 1970s, this underdeveloped country was contemptuously dismissed in Washington as just another "banana republic." But to hear Washington tell it now, the government in Managua, if allowed to survive, will cause the downfall of Western Civilization.

Nicaragua is the size of Iowa (50,193 sq. miles), and sits smack in the heart of Central America. Only 3,350,000 people live there. It is bordered on the north by Honduras, by Costa Rica on the south, and on the east and west by the Atlantic and Pacific. Volcanic mountains run through the middle of the country, splitting it into eastern and western regions.

Seventy percent of the people are *mestizos* of mixed Indio and Spanish descent, most of whom live in the west. Another 17% are of purely Spanish extraction and also live primarily in the west. The sparsely populated Atlantic Coast is home to the Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians, and to Black Creoles who originally came from Jamaica.

Western inhabitants speak Spanish, the official language. Indian tongues and English predominate on the Atlantic Coast.

The Indios in the west were conquered and enslaved by the Spanish in the early 16th century. Spanish attempts to subdue the Atlantic Coast proved unsuccessful; the English gained influence there in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Nicaragua won independence from Spain in 1821. After a brief unification with Mexico, it became completely independent in 1838. The Atlantic Coast, called Moskitia, remained an autonomous region until 1860

when it fell under Nicaragua's "protection." The region was forcibly incorporated in 1894.

Nicaraguan independence was done for at the beginning of this century when the U.S., seeking a strategic base to extend its Latin American and world empires, moved into Central America. U.S. Marines invaded Nicaragua several times during this period, for the last time in 1926, in order to put down the revolt led by August Cesar Sandino against the U.S. and Nicaraguan bourgeoisies. After installing the Somoza family in power, the Marines departed in 1933. Sandino was assassinated by Somoza during "peace negotiations."

The Somoza family, propped up by a murderous National Guard, ruled Nicaragua for the next 46 years. Their chief accomplishments at the helm of state were to amass a fortune estimated in billions, enforce an imperialist-dominated export economy, and slaughter untold thousands of actual or potential political opponents.

By the '70s, Nicaragua was the poorest, most repressed nation in Central America.

Nicaragua's chief cities and industries today are in the west. Managua, the capital, and Leon are the two largest cities.

The country today is primarily agri-

cultural with private land ownership predominating. Major crops include bananas, cotton, fruit, coffee, beans. The chief industries include oil refining, chemicals, food processing, and textiles. Both agriculture and industry are geared to export production.

Two-thirds of the economy remains in private hands.

The attempt by Managua to impose Spanish on the Atlantic Coast peoples helped precipitate a rebellion led by the Miskitos in 1981. The uprising continues today, stemming from Sandinista refusal to recognize the right of the Indians to national self-determination. This refusal imperils the revolution itself.

The revolution is under fierce siege in 1988, epitomized by the brutal, U.S.-engendered contra war. Because Nicaragua insists on political self-determination vis-à-vis imperialism, which is chronically terrified of the domino effect (read Permanent Revolution) in Latin America, tiny Nicaragua must be smashed.

Workers' & Farmers' Government Atop a Bourgeois State

The Nicaraguan revolution, seeking survival, autonomy, and basic rights, is profoundly *democratic*.

But what kind of democracy, bourgeois or proletarian, has the revolution achieved? What does the revolution aspire to? What is the state of the revolution and *what kind of state* stands at the helm of the country?

Nicaragua remains a *capitalist* state where bourgeois property relations hold sway and where governmental structure and policies aim to preserve a predominantly bourgeois economy and administrative apparatus. But Nicaragua is peculiar in that the Sandinista regime, a *workers' and farmers' government* that headed an insurrection, still refuses after eight years of turmoil to break with imperialism. The regime is inherently unstable and fragile, resting on antagonistic poles of a capitalist economy vs. the material needs and democratic aspirations of the people.

The Sandinista regime is in crisis, and the climax will be reached either in a deepening of the struggle and a final assault on capital, or the destruction of the revolution.

The regime took power at the head of a revolution which led right up to the threshold of a fundamental overturn in property relations, that is, from capitalist to nationalized property. The government took over all of Somoza's holdings in industry, agriculture and banking.

Only by great effort did the Sandinistas stop further expropriations by the people. The leaders arrested the revolution at a point where it could still accommodate U.S. imperialism yet (they hoped) would allow for economic development, social services and the flowering of democracy.

But the U.S.-created contra war and internal capitalist sabotage are the most incontrovertible proof that democracy and national development are wholly incompatible with continued capitalist hegemony.

The Sandinistas make concession after concession to capitalism in pursuit of an illusion. Yet they are the acknowledged representatives of the workers and peasants, and of democracy, and cannot allow the destruction of the revolution without destroying themselves. They are compelled by contra outrages, at critical moments, to rally the people to defend the revolution.

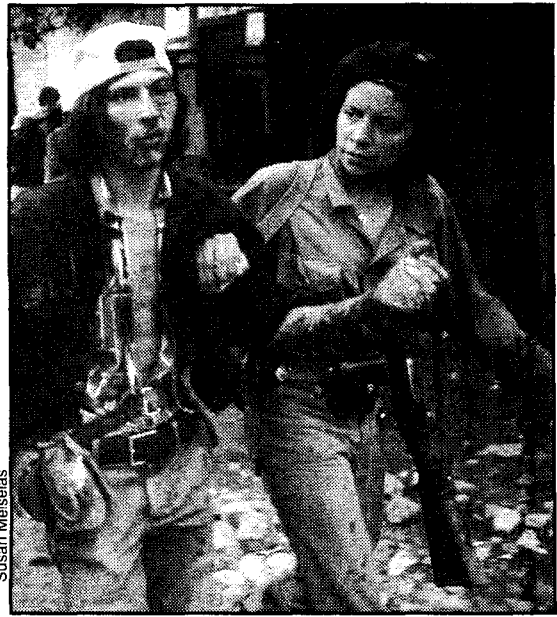
They seek at every step to limit, hamstring, and control mass action, lest it grow over into avowed anti-capitalist warfare. Yet the logic of revolution and counterrevolution is such that in the event of impending bourgeois victory, they may yet be impelled, if only to save their popular support and their own lives, to spearhead a direct assault on capital.

Such action would signal the beginning of a *workers' state* in Nicaragua.

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Sobre Este Documento

El documento "Sobre la Naturaleza del Estado de Nicaragua" fue adoptado durante La Convención Nacional del FSP de 1988 como un análisis certero y conciso de las ganancias logradas a pulso y de las faenas inconclusas de la revolución sandinista. La resolución concluyó que sólo avanzando el reemplazamiento del régimen del capital por la consolidación del Estado obrero, podría el FSLN defender y extender la revolución en contra del



The 1979 insurrection—bloodied but unstoppable. La insurrección de 1979—ensangrentada pero imparabla.

cerco imperialista y del sabotaje interno burgués.

La derrota electoral en febrero de 1990 del FSLN confirmó — hacia lo negativo — nuestra evaluación.

En 1986, los autores, al escribir de parte del Comité Nacional del FSP, iniciaron una investigación de dos años al respecto de todos los aspectos de la revolución nicaragüense. ¿Cuál era, exactamente, la naturaleza de este sorprendente y aparentemente sin precedente levantamiento que capturó la imaginación mundial? Los autores sintieron que solamente estudiando profundamente a la revolución y su desarrollo podrían llegar a conocerla, y por lo tanto contribuir con una efectividad máxima a su defensa contra la reacción mundial.

Ellos querían entender la contradicción entre su dinámica democrática, esencialmente anticapitalista y la postura consistentemente acomodadiza de los sandinistas al confrontar al imperialismo.

Una multitud de asuntos sacaron a relucir al carácter contradictorio de la revolución: Las cuestiones de la economía "mixta" y la democracia "pluralista"; la condición de la mujer y de los indígenas y *creoles* de la Costa Atlántica dentro de la revolución. ¿En dónde, a la luz de la verdad de estas relaciones, podría discernirse la naturaleza y trayectoria de la revolución?

Recurriendo al marxismo, la ciencia de la revolución y a las lecciones de la rebelión anticapitalista de los siglos XIX y XX, los autores se dieron cuenta que para entender a esta revolución se requería embarcarse en una investigación exhaustiva y objetiva del carácter del Estado nicaragüense y de los cambios que sufrió éste desde la insurrección de 1979.

¿Qué es lo que hizo necesaria una investigación del Estado? El que el Estado — la telaraña de instituciones que mantiene a la sociedad civil en su lugar: Las militares, policíacas, judiciales, burocráticas gubernamentales, sistemas escolares etc. — sea el instrumento a través del cual una clase rige sobre la sociedad en busca de sus propios intereses, reprimiendo a todas las otras clases. El Estado es el manantial de todo el poder social mientras existan las clases.

En nuestros días, sólo una de dos clases opuestas, contendientes e irreconciliables puede mantener el poder, el proletariado o la burguesía. Un Estado, o es obrero o es capitalista.

Dado el lugar del Estado en los asuntos de la humanidad, la suma importancia de la cuestión de la naturaleza del Estado nicaragüense posrevolucionario —

¿capitalista o proletario? ¿en armonía o antagónica a la arremetida fundamentalmente anticapitalista de la revolución? — es obvia.

Las revoluciones anticapitalistas viven o mueren dependiendo de si colocan al poder estatal de acuerdo a los intereses sociales de la clase trabajadora. Es antes que nada cuestión de defensa propia. En un levantamiento revolucionario como el de Nicaragua, los obreros y campesinos reprimidos retan abiertamente al dominio imperialista y al régimen burgués en casa. El reto provoca inevitablemente un contraataque militar y económico. Se hace necesaria una defensa fuerte, y el arma necesaria defensiva es el Estado obrero — esencialmente los trabajadores organizados y armados por sí mismos y los aliados campesinos — los cuales defienden sin máscaras sus intereses sociales y económicos en contra de sus explotadores.

Como se ha mencionado, esta resolución concluyó después de la investigación, que la revolución no había arrojado el yugo del capital.

En 1989, los autores llevaron este documento a Nicaragua, para comprobar su evaluación contra lo que vieran y experimentaran en el terreno propio de la revolución. Discutieron el contenido y conclusiones del documento con dirigentes y bases del FSLN, mujeres, sindicalistas, lesbianas y *gays*, jóvenes, trotskistas nicaragüenses, miskitos y *creoles* de la Costa Atlántica. Lograron sobrepasar de esa manera la carencia de acceso en los EUA a material crítico sobre las cuestiones políticas que deletrean la vida o muerte de la revolución.

A su regreso a los EUA, escribieron: "Una característica que define a la gente con la que conversamos era su orgullo: orgullo de haber derrocado a Somoza, orgullo de su lucha de diez años en contra de la agresión estadounidense, orgullo del gobierno del FSLN — su gobierno, instalado por ellos, y en el poder hoy en día en virtud de su apoyo".

"El orgullo sustenta al espíritu. Pero el espíritu no es indestructible. Los vertiginosos días posinsurreccionales ya se fueron, y muchos nicaragüenses se están desgastando, desilusionando, desmoralizando, desengañando, mientras que los sandinistas intentan lo imposible, el reconciliar a las aspiraciones democráticas de las masas con el régimen tiránico de un sistema económico operado por y para los capitalistas".

La derrota sandinista en las elecciones de febrero constituyó un paso gigantesco hacia el desmantelamiento de hecho de la revolución. La derrota está enraizada en el fracaso o rechazo del FSLN en movilizar a los obreros y campesinos pobres de Nicaragua para la creación de un Estado proletario. Este fracaso, engendrado del deseo de los sandinistas de coexistir y conciliarse con el capital internacional, resultó en ásperas privaciones, especialmente para los asalariados urbanos, mujeres, las gentes empobrecidas de la Costa Atlántica y los campesinos pobres.

Las privaciones se han incrementado bajo La Chamorro, lo mismo que la resistencia a su gobierno.

La necesidad de organizar la defensa de la revolución nicaragüense es más urgente que nunca hoy en día. Una invasión estadounidense para aplastar toda la resistencia al capital sigue como amenaza. Creemos que el análisis contenido en este documento es una herramienta importante para construir esta defensa, tanto aquí en los EUA como entre los anti-imperialistas en Nicaragua y el resto del mundo.

Esta resolución será publicada en dos fascículos. Una posterior delineará nuestra perspectiva de los desarrollos en curso y de la posibilidad de un renacimiento y victoria revolucionaria.

I. Telón de Fondo

Hace nueve años, en 1979, el pueblo nicaragüense lanzó un reto emocionante a la hegemonía yanqui en Centroamérica, y derrocó a la dictadura somocista.

La pequeña República de Nicaragua parece a primer vistazo una amenaza improbable a los EUA. Hasta los años 1970's, este país subdesarrollado era descontentado desdeñosamente como solamente "otra república bananera." Pero al escuchar a Washington ahora, el gobierno de Managua, si se le dejara sobrevivir, causaría la caída de la civilización occidental.

Nicaragua es del tamaño de Iowa (aprox. 140,000 km cuadrados), y se localiza en el pleno corazón de Centroamérica. Solamente 3,350,000 personas la habitan. Está limitada al norte por Honduras, por Costa Rica en el sur y en el occidente y oriente por los Océanos Pacífico y Atlántico respectivamente. La Cordillera Volcánica corre por el medio del país, dividiéndolo en regiones occidental y oriental.

El setenta por ciento de la gente es *mestiza* de ascendencia indígena y española, la mayoría de la cual vive en el occidente. Otro 17% es de extracción española pura y habita también principalmente en la región occidental. La escasa habitada Costa Atlántica es el hogar de los indios miskitos, sumo y rama, y de negros *creoles* provenientes originalmente de Jamaica.

Los habitantes occidentales hablan español, el idioma oficial. Los idiomas indígenas y el inglés predominan en la Costa Atlántica.

Los indios del occidente fueron conquistados y esclavizados por los españoles a principios del siglo XVI. Los intentos españoles de subyugar la costa Atlántica resultaron ser inefectivos; los ingleses lograron su influencia ahí en los siglos XVI y XVII.

Nicaragua logró su independencia de España en 1821. Después de una breve unificación con México, se volvió independiente completamente en 1838. La Costa Atlántica, llamada La Mosquitia, permaneció como una región autónoma hasta 1860 cuando cayó bajo la "protección" de Nicaragua. La región fue incorporada por la fuerza en 1894.

La independencia nicaragüense fue malograda al comenzar este siglo cuando los EUA, buscando una base estratégica para extender su imperio latinoamericano y mundial, se metió en Centroamérica. Los infantes de marina estadounidenses invadieron Nicaragua varias veces durante este periodo, la última vez en 1926, para ahogar la revuelta dirigida por Augusto Cesar Sandino en contra de la burguesía nicaragüense y de los EUA. Después de instalar a la familia Somoza en el poder, los *marines* se retiraron en 1933. Sandino fue asesinado por Somoza durante "negociaciones de paz".

La familia Somoza, apuntalada por la asesina Guardia Nacional, rigió Nicara-

gua por los siguientes 46 años. Sus logros principales en la cúspide del poder fueron el amasar una fortuna estimada en miles de millones, lograr una economía de exportación dominada por el imperialismo y la matanza de miles de opositores políticos reales o en potencia.

Durante los 1970's, Nicaragua era la nación más pobre y más reprimida de Centroamérica.

Las ciudades e industrias principales de Nicaragua están en el occidente. Managua, la capital, y León son las dos ciudades más grandes.

El país en la actualidad es primordialmente agrícola, en donde predomina la propiedad privada. Los cultivos principales incluyen plátanos, algodón, frutas, café y frijoles. Las industrias principales incluyen la refinación de petróleo, productos químicos, procesado de alimentos y textiles. La agricultura y la industria están ambas orientadas a la producción para la exportación.

Dos terceras partes de la economía permanecen en manos particulares.

Los intentos de Managua de imponer el español a los pueblos de la Costa Atlántica ayudaron a precipitar una rebelión encabezada por los miskitos en 1981. El levantamiento continúa en la actualidad, surgió del rechazo sandinista de reconocer el derecho de los indios a la autodeterminación. Este rechazo pone en peligro a la revolución misma.

La revolución se encuentra bajo un sitio feroz en 1988, tipificado por la brutal guerra de los contras engendrada por los EUA. Ya que Nicaragua insiste en la autodeterminación política de cara a cara al imperialismo, el cual está aterrorizado crónicamente por el efecto dominó (léase revolución permanente) en Latinoamérica, la pequeña Nicaragua debe de ser apachurrada.

Un Gobierno de Trabajadores y Campesinos Sobre un Estado Burgués

La revolución nicaragüense, que busca supervivencia, autonomía y derechos básicos, es profundamente *democrática*.

Pero ¿qué clase de democracia, burguesa o proletaria, ha logrado la revolución? ¿a qué aspira la revolución? ¿cuál es el estado de la revolución y *qué clase de Estado* se yergue al timón del país?

Nicaragua permanece como un Estado *capitalista* en donde las relaciones burguesas capitalistas dominan y donde las estructuras gubernamentales y políticas apuntan a preservar una economía y aparato administrativo predominantemente burgués.

Pero Nicaragua es peculiar en el que el régimen sandinista, *un gobierno de obreros y campesinos* que encabezó la insurrección, todavía rechaza después de ocho años de confusión, romper con el

a la página 5 del suplemento



In July 1990, workers struck against proposed government austerity measures and forced Chamorro to capitulate. En julio de 1990, los trabajadores levantaron una huelga en contra de las medidas de austeridad propuestas por el gobierno y forzaron a La Chamorro a capitular.

Mao in China and Castro in Cuba took power without intending to break with the bourgeoisie. But events propelled them to bow to history and expropriate the exploiters. Kerensky in Russia refused and was swept away. The Sandinistas have held power for nine years—an unprecedented length of time for a "mixed" regime born out of revolution, and the result of an unusually tense equilibrium in world class struggle. But the time is arriving swiftly when they too will have

to make the fateful decision, for or against socialism, for or against the intent and logic of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Marxism and the State

The Marxist-Leninist concept of the state is key to understanding the sociology of any revolution. This is because the state is the *instrument of class rule* in civil society, the means by which one class

maintains economic, social, political and cultural control over other classes. In our epoch, the long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, either the bourgeoisie or the working class holds the real levers of state power in any country.

Hence we must analyze the state—and, in particular, assess whether the upheaval culminated in the formation of a workers' state—in order to arrive at a correct and precise orientation to the Nicaraguan revolution.

Marxism has steadily refined the concept of the state via concrete analyses of revolutions from the 19th century to the present. Marx closely studied, and identified, the emergence of the embryonic workers' state of the Paris Commune in 1871, furnishing the theoretical underpinnings to all the later analyses of modern-day workers' states in Russia, China, Eastern Europe and Cuba. The present evaluation of the Nicaraguan state rests on this rich theoretical heritage.

II. What Determines the Nature of a State?

It is first of all evident that the class nature of a state can only be determined by uncovering the *relationship* of that state to the prevailing mode of production and corresponding property relations in a given society.

This is implied in the very definition of the state as an instrument for the maintenance of class rule or, saying the same thing, the political means for instituting and/or maintaining a specific mode of production and the exploitative economic relations that derive therefrom.

The ancient Greco-Roman states arose out of and perpetuated a system of slave-holding economy. Feudal principalities cemented the exploitation of serf by lord. Capitalist states have as their essential aim the preservation of private ownership of the means of production.

Workers' states exist in turn to expropriate private property and on this basis build a socialist economy, that is, a productive system that harmonizes with the social nature of labor.

In every case we speak of a relationship between a political system of rule and a particular system of economy.

How to determine this relationship between state and economy in any given instance, and, in particular, the case of Nicaragua?

There are three factors involved in the investigation: 1) the nature of the property relations and the extent to which they prevail; 2) the character of the state apparatus, that is, the degree to which the previous Somocista regime has been dismantled; 3) the program and goals of the new leadership, i.e., the character of its relationship to the masses and their needs.

Please note: no single one of these factors can tell us whether or not Nicaragua is a workers' state; they must be considered together, in their interaction with one another.

But isn't it merely a question of the character of the existing economic relations? How then explain the fact that the Soviet workers' state existed in its infancy wholly on the basis of bourgeois property relations and for quite some time afterward supported petty private production in agriculture? Here it was a question of the *publicized intent* of the Bolshevik leadership, successfully carried out, to expropriate the capitalists and lay the basis for a socialized economy.

The state apparatus? The Soviet Union under Stalin suffered an extensive "bourgeoisification" of its state—in the military, law courts, electoral mechanisms, the institution of one-man rule. Yet the regime was compelled to defend the forms of property created by the October revolution, and thus preserved the proletarian character of the Soviet state.

The revolutionary leadership must aim, even if only reluctantly, at the destruction of bourgeois property relations, or those relations will remain intact. Yet all the will in the world will count for nothing if the material means for transforming the economy are lacking.

So, keeping the foregoing in mind, let us proceed.

The Economic Foundation of the State

The state is an organized power that rules over a society at a given time and place and operates essentially in the interests of a single class. And these class



The Sandinista Army, a "people's army," but subject to bourgeois-style command. *El ejército sandinista, un "ejército popular," pero sujeto a un mando al estilo burgués.*

interests are embodied in a *distinctive form of property relations*, that is, in a particular relationship of the classes to the means of production—to the tools and technology and physical plants and land needed to create social wealth.

The state is an historical phenomenon. Engels was the first to trace its emergence out of communal-gentile society, which occurred when the capacity to produce food, clothing, shelter and tools evolved to the stage where the tribe could produce more than was necessary for minimal survival.

This surplus, i.e., cattle, gradually fell more and more into the hands of the particular group, i.e., males, who worked with and controlled these objects and tools of production. This group eventually developed into the possessing class, which stood in a qualitatively different relation to the means of production than the non-possessors: the former owned the most lucrative means of production and therefore dominated and exploited the others. Society was thus split into classes with antagonistic and irreconcilable economic interests.

These class antagonisms threatened to reduce society to endless, sterile conflict, or destroy it altogether. Hence, the state emerged as a manifestation of this conflict and a mechanism for control and regulation.

All states rule society from above; they are the instrument of the dominant class for maintaining, through force, a system of property relations that guarantees to the rulers ongoing hegemony.

Bourgeois states, for example, are rooted in, sustain, and perpetuate capitalist private property and domination

over the working class. The capitalist class *owns* the means of production and appropriates to itself the surplus product in the form of profits gleaned from the exploitation of labor. The state power forcefully defends this system.

In 1937, Leon Trotsky, discussing the nature of the Soviet state and its bureaucracy, had this to say on the question of the state's relation to the economy:

...in its dependence on objective and subjective conditions the rule of the proletariat "is able to express itself in a number of different governmental forms"... The class nature of the state is, consequently, determined not by its political forms but by its social content, i.e., by the character of the forms of property and productive relations which the given state guards and defends...

But does not history really know of cases of class conflict between the economy and the state? It does!... In the first months of Soviet rule the proletariat reigned on the basis of a bourgeois economy. In the field of agriculture the dictatorship of the proletariat operated for a number of years on the basis of a petty-bourgeois economy (to a considerable degree it does so even now). Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period of time

would have to base itself upon the nationalized economy. But what does such a type of temporary conflict between the economy and the state mean? It means a revolution or a counterrevolution. The victory of one class over another signifies that it will reconstruct the economy in the interests of the victors...!

Trotsky here pinpoints the *total upheaval of the economic bedrock that must ensue from any change in the class nature of the state*. A workers' state is premised on such a revolutionary change, whether immediate or gradual. Transformation of capitalist property relations entails taking the ownership of the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class and collectivizing them, nationalizing them, in the hands of the state on behalf of the working class. In this way, the new workers' state rules in the interests of the working class and its allies (the peasantry, farmers, small shopkeepers, professionals, artists and intellectuals) and against the interests of the bourgeoisie.

This Marxist understanding of the state has been refined by decades of experience accumulated via actual proletarian assaults on bourgeois states, and the ensuing enriching of our theory. Analyzing the degeneration of the first worker's state, Trotsky demonstrated that despite the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, its destruction of democracy and political suppression of the working class, the USSR remained a dictatorship of the proletariat by virtue of its replacement of capitalist property relations with state ownership of the means of production and the fact that the regime was forced to defend state ownership as the basis for its existence. Trotsky's recognition of this key criterion for determining the nature of the state was later amplified by the world Trotskyist movement in grappling with the theoretical and political questions posed by the Eastern European workers' states in the post-World War II era.

These states, with the exception of Yugoslavia, lacked *any* form of self-organization of the working class. The new state apparatus and the total upheaval of economic relations had been instituted by the military force of the Red Army. Through intensive study and debate, it became clear (to all except the "state capitalist" revisionists of Trotskyism) that the transformation of property relations had resulted in workers' states, despite their *deformed* (as distinguished from degenerated) character.

On the other hand, the popular revolutionary regimes which seized power in China and Cuba established workers' states only at the point when these regimes went ahead with the expropriation of the capitalists. Their original intent was to install a bourgeois democracy, but life and the revolutionary momentum overcame their erroneous theory of "stages."

Rooted in these historical lessons, our investigation of Nicaragua will start with an objective appraisal of property relations there and how they have changed since the 1979 revolution and insurrection.

to supplement page 6

imperialismo. El régimen es inherentemente inestable y frágil, al apoyarse en los polos antagonistas de una economía capitalista vs. las necesidades materiales y aspiraciones democráticas del pueblo.

El régimen sandinista está en crisis, y el clímax será alcanzado ya sea en una profundización de la lucha y un ataque final contra el capital o en la destrucción de la revolución.

El régimen tomó el poder encabezando una revolución que llegó al umbral de una voltereta fundamental en las relaciones de propiedad, o sea, de la propiedad capitalista a la nacionalizada. El gobierno incautó todas las posesiones de Somoza en la industria, agricultura y banca.

Sólo un gran esfuerzo de los sandinistas detuvo más expropiaciones por parte del pueblo. Los dirigentes detuvieron a la revolución al punto donde todavía podían acomodar al imperialismo estadounidense, teniendo la esperanza que así se les permitiera aún un desarrollo económico, de servicios sociales y el florecimiento de la democracia.

Pero la guerra contra, creada por los

EUA, y el sabotaje interno capitalista, son las pruebas más incontrovertibles de que la democracia y el desarrollo nacional son enteramente incompatibles con la continuada hegemonía capitalista.

Los sandinistas, al perseguir una ilusión, hacen concesiones tras concesiones al capitalismo. Sin embargo son los representantes reconocidos de los obreros y campesinos y de la democracia, y no pueden permitir la destrucción de la revolución sin destruirse a sí mismos. Están obligados por los ultrajes de la contra, en momentos críticos, a unir al pueblo para defender a la revolución.

Ellos intentan a cada paso limitar, poner riendas y controlar la acción de las masas, no sea que ésta se convierta en una guerra confesa anticapitalista. Pero la lógica de la revolución y de la contrarrevolución es tal, que en el evento de una victoria burguesa en ciernes, ésta pueda ser todavía impedida, aunque sólo sea para salvar el apoyo popular y sus propias vidas, al ser punta de lanza en el ataque directo al capital.

Tal acción señalaría el comienzo de

un **Estado obrero** en Nicaragua.

Mao en China y Castro en Cuba tomaron el poder sin la intención de romper con la burguesía. Pero los eventos los impulsaron a inclinarse ante la historia y expropiar a los explotadores. Kerenski en Rusia se opuso y fue barrido. Los sandinistas han mantenido el poder por nueve años — un lapso de tiempo inprecedente para un régimen "mixto" nacido de una revolución, y el resultado de un poco común y tenso equilibrio en la lucha clasista mundial. Pero el tiempo llega apresuradamente, cuando ellos tendrán también que decidirse por el destino, a favor o en contra del socialismo, a favor o en contra de la intención y lógica de la revolución nicaragüense.

Marxismo y Estado

El concepto marxista-leninista del Estado es la clave para entender la sociología de cualquier revolución. Esto es debido a que el Estado es un **instrumento del dominio de clase** en la sociedad civil,

los medios por los cuales una clase mantiene control económico, social, político y cultural sobre las demás clases. En nuestra época, o sea el largo periodo de transición del capitalismo al socialismo, es ya sea la burguesía o la clase obrera la que mantiene las palancas reales del poder estatal en un país cualquiera.

Luego entonces debemos analizar al Estado — y, en particular sopesar si el levantamiento culminó en la formación de un Estado obrero — para llegar a la orientación correcta y precisa de la revolución nicaragüense.

El marxismo ha refinado constantemente el concepto del Estado por medio del análisis concreto de las revoluciones desde el siglo XIX al presente. Marx estudió de cerca e identificó el surgimiento de un Estado embrionario de trabajadores durante la comuna de París en 1871, proporcionando los apuntes para todos los posteriores análisis de los Estados obreros de hoy en Rusia, China, Europa Oriental y Cuba. La evaluación presentada aquí del Estado nicaragüense se cimenta sobre esta rica herencia teórica.

II. ¿Qué es lo que Determina la Naturaleza del Estado?

Primeramente, es evidente que la naturaleza clasista de un Estado puede ser determinada solamente descubriendo la **relación** de ese Estado con el modo prevaleciente de producción y las correspondientes relaciones de propiedad en una sociedad dada.

Esto está implicado en la misma definición del Estado como un instrumento para el mantenimiento del dominio de clase o, diciendo lo mismo, los medios políticos de instituir o mantener un modo específico de producción y la explotación de las relaciones económicas del cual se derivan.

Los Estados antiguos greco-romanos se levantaron y perpetuaron a partir de una economía basada en la esclavitud. Los principados feudales cementaron la explotación del siervo por los señores feudales. Los Estados capitalistas tienen como meta principal la preservación de la propiedad privada de los bienes de producción.

Los Estados obreros existen a su vez para expropiar la propiedad privada y sobre esta base construir la economía socialista, ésto es, un sistema productivo que armonice con la naturaleza social del trabajo.

En todos los casos hablamos de una relación entre un sistema político de dominio y un sistema económico particular.

¿Cómo determinar esta relación entre el Estado y la economía en un caso dado, y en particular en el caso de Nicaragua?

Existen tres factores involucrados en la investigación: 1) la naturaleza de las relaciones de propiedad y la extensión en la cual prevalecen; 2) el carácter del aparato estatal, o sea, el grado al cual el régimen somocista ha sido desmantelado; 3) el programa y objetivos de la nueva dirigencia, ésto es, el carácter de sus relaciones con las masas y sus necesidades.

Notar por favor: Ninguno de estos factores por sí solo puede decirnos si Nicaragua es o no un Estado obrero: ellos deben ser considerados en conjunto, en sus interacciones entre sí.

¿Pero no es ésto meramente una cuestión del carácter de las relaciones económicas existentes? ¿Cómo entonces explicar el hecho de que el Estado obrero soviético existió en su infancia enteramente sobre la base de las relaciones de propiedad burguesas y por un buen tiempo después apoyó la producción agrícola privada en pequeño? Aquí fue cuestión de las **intenciones publicadas** de la dirigencia bolchevique, la cual exitosamente llevó a cabo la expropiación de los capitalistas y colocó la base para una economía socializada.

¿El aparato estatal? La Unión Soviética bajo Stalin sufrió una "burguesifica-



Vladimir Lenin

ción" de su Estado — en lo militar, cortes legales, mecanismos electorales y la institución del gobierno por un sólo hombre. Sin embargo el régimen fue obligado a defender las formas de propiedad creadas por La Revolución de Octubre, y así preservar el carácter proletario del Estado soviético.

El liderazgo revolucionario tiene que apuntar, aunque sea reaciamente, a la destrucción de las relaciones burguesas de propiedad, o esas relaciones permanecerán intactas. Aún así toda la voluntad del mundo no servirá para nada si se carece de los medios materiales para transformar la economía.

Así que manteniendo lo previo en mente procedamos.

Los Fundamentos Económicos del Estado

El Estado es un poder organizado que domina a una sociedad en un momento y lugar dados, y opera esencialmente para los intereses de una sola clase. Estos intereses de clase están incorporados en una **forma distintiva de relaciones de propiedad**, ésto es, en la relación particular de las clases con los medios de producción — con las herramientas, tecnología, planta física y la tierra necesaria para crear riqueza social.

El Estado es un fenómeno histórico, Engels fue el primero en rastrear su surgimiento a partir de la sociedad comunal-gentil, lo cual ocurrió cuando la capacidad de producir alimentos, vestido, casa y herramientas evolucionó hasta la etapa donde la tribu podía producir más de lo necesario para la mínima supervivencia.

Este excedente, p. ej. el ganado, gradualmente cayó más y más en las manos de un grupo en particular, p. ej. los hombres, los cuales trabajaban y controlaban estos objetos y herramientas de producción. Este grupo se desarrolló eventualmente como la clase poseedora, la cual se erigió en una relación cualitativamente diferente con los medios de producción que la de los no- poseedores: los previos eran propietarios de los medios más lucrativos de producción y por lo tanto dominaban y explotaban a los demás. La sociedad por lo tanto se dividió en clases con intereses económicos antagónicos e irreconciliables.

Estos antagonismos de clase amenazaron en reducir a la sociedad a un conflicto sin fin y estéril o a destruirla por completo. Luego entonces, el Estado emergió como una manifestación de este conflicto y un mecanismo de control y regulación.

Todos los Estados gobiernan a la sociedad desde arriba; ellos son el instrumento de la clase dominante para mantener, a través de la fuerza, un sistema de relaciones de propiedad que garantice a los gobernantes su continua hegemonía.

Los Estados burgueses, por ejemplo, están enraizados en sostener y perpetuar al sistema capitalista de la propiedad privada y el dominio sobre la clase obrera. La clase capitalista es **propietaria** de los medios de producción y se apropia de los productos excedentes en la forma de ganancias cosechadas de la explotación del trabajo. El poder estatal defiende este sistema con la fuerza.

En 1937, León Trotsky, al discutir la naturaleza del Estado soviético y su burocracia, tuvo lo siguiente que decir al respecto de las relaciones del Estado con la economía:

...en su dependencia de condiciones objetivas y subjetivas, el gobierno del proletariado "es capaz de expresarse en un número diferente de formas gubernamentales"... La naturaleza de clase del Estado está, consecuentemente, determinada no por sus formas políticas sino por su conteni-

do social, o sea, por el carácter de las formas productivas y de propiedad que un Estado dado cuida y defiende...

...Pero, ¿no sabe la historia de casos sobre el conflicto de clases entre la economía y el Estado? ¡Claro que sí!... En los primeros meses del gobierno soviético el proletariado reinó sobre la base de una economía burguesa. En el campo de la agricultura la dictadura del proletariado operó por algunos años sobre la base de la economía pequeño-burguesa (y hasta cierto grado todavía opera así ahora). Si la contrarrevolución burguesa tuviera éxito en la URSS, el nuevo gobierno por un periodo largo de tiempo tendría que basarse en la economía nacionalizada. ¿Pero qué significa tal conflicto temporal entre la economía y el Estado? Significa una revolución o una contrarrevolución. La victoria de una clase sobre la otra significa que ésta reconstruirá la economía en base a los intereses del victorioso...¹



León Trotsky

Trotsky aquí precisa **la total voltereta de los cimientos económicos que debe seguir a partir de cualquier cambio en la naturaleza de clase del Estado**. Las premisas de un Estado obrero se basan en tal cambio revolucionario, ya sea inmediato o gradual. Las transformaciones de las relaciones capitalistas de propiedad conllevan el tomar la propiedad de los medios de producción de las manos de la clase capitalista y su colectivización, nacionalizándolos en las manos del Estado de parte de la clase obrera. De esta manera, el nuevo Estado obrero gobierna para los intereses de la clase trabajadora y sus aliados (el campesinado, agricultores, pequeños comerciantes, profesionales, artistas e intelectuales) y en contra de los intereses de la burguesía.

Esta interpretación marxista del Estado ha sido refinada por decenios de **a la página 7 del suplemento**

In addition to the basic question of "Who owns what?" we need to raise two other issues:

First, to what degree is the Nicaraguan government actually able to control and guide and plan the economy? Its degree of control will reflect the extent to which property relations have actually been transformed.

The second economic question is whether the government maintains a *monopoly of foreign trade*. Does the state prohibit private entrepreneurial deals with other lands? Does it control and regulate all interactions between the domestic economy and the international market?

Trotsky insisted that this was a necessary condition for the economy of a workers' state. The monopoly allows the state to control income from exports, and to make all decisions on spending foreign currency for imports. All workers' states to date have required the monopoly in order to survive in the capitalist-dominated international market, that is, to protect national planning from the anarchy of the international marketplace.

Guided by the Marxist elucidation of economic criteria, we will review the character of Nicaragua's economy, discern its dominant property relations, and so begin to trace the dynamic between these relations and the state.

Smashing the Bourgeois State Apparatus

More than a century ago, Marx and Engels uncovered the relation between the economic foundations of the state and the apparatus erected to rule over it.

They observed that the bourgeois state employs an apparatus which includes coercive forces (army, police and prisons) as well as courts, laws, and bureaucracy.

It is important not to confuse the *state* with the *government*. The government involves the administration of the state, and its form may change without altering the essential class character of the state. Bourgeois states, for example, have many varieties of government: bourgeois-democratic, fascist, military-police dictatorship, or constitutional monarchy.

Marx found that the lessons of the Paris Commune proved conclusively that the bourgeois state apparatus, whatever its various forms, was designed by capital to rule over labor, and that the "working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purpose."² In *State and Revolution*, Lenin elaborated on the necessity to completely dismantle the old governmental apparatus and replace it with new forms befitting a workers' state. Key to this process is the destruction of bourgeois parliamentarianism, the legislative system of bourgeois democracy. Lenin wrote:

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and oppress the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarianism...

The way out of parliamentarianism is to be found, of course, not in the abolition of the representative institutions and the elective

principle, but in the conversion of the representative institutions from mere 'talking shops' into working bodies...

The venal and rotten parliamentarianism of bourgeois society is replaced in the Commune by institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion does not degenerate into deception, for the parliamentarians must them-

humanity from wage-slavery.

Society continues to need class government until the capitalist antagonists are completely destroyed or neutralized.

Only weeks after Lenin wrote *State and Revolution*, history provided real-life confirmation of his words. The Russian working class triumphed in October 1917 and established the first workers' state. The state apparatus of the Provisional Government was promptly destroyed—army, secret police, bureaus,

ratus, we will look at the evidence of destruction of the Somocista state and examine the new ruling institutions, assessing the degree to which they constitute a qualitatively new and different state apparatus.

Program and Goals of the Leadership

The third criterion for a workers' state is the character of the leadership.

Leadership is a prime factor of revolution that must be looked at in terms of its policies, goals and direction of movement vis-à-vis the transformation of the government and the economy.

The vital criterion of leadership is grounded in the experience of the October Revolution, where the aggressive socialist program and goals of the Bolsheviks blended with the assumption of power by the soviets and the smashing of the capitalist state apparatus to establish a workers' state. *The Soviet Union in November, 1917 was a workers' state despite the fact that the transformation of capitalist property relations*



Sandinista leaders (President Daniel Ortega second from left). Lifted to power by workers and peasants, they favored the capitalists—and lost an election. Los dirigentes sandinistas (El Presidente Daniel Ortega, segundo de la izquierda). Elevados al poder por los obreros y campesinos, favorecieron a los capitalistas—y perdieron unos comicios.

selfes work, must themselves execute their own laws, must themselves verify their own results in actual life, must themselves be directly responsible to their electorate.³

Hence, the working class replaces the pseudo-democratic parliamentary mechanism of the bourgeoisie with new forms which *combine the legislative and executive functions* of government, which rule in full view of the people, and which are directly accountable to them.

Lenin repeatedly emphasized that government officials should be paid at the level of workers' wages. Such a pay scale would inoculate them against bourgeois influence, i.e., the temptations of material privilege.

The workers' state, said Lenin, would also abolish the standing army and replace it with a *militia* consisting of and directly controlled by the armed people themselves. Through such steps, society makes the qualitative leap from the bourgeois "democracy" for the rich minority to real democracy for the majority.

Lenin insisted that whatever its differences in form, the essence of a workers' state is "the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing the oppressors."⁴ The dictatorship of the proletariat combines the first genuine democracy for the poor and oppressed majority with a systematic repression of the capitalist exploiters. Repression is necessary to throttle their forcible resistance and free

duma (parliament) and all—and a new form of rule emerged that was unique to the fledgling state: soviets, or workers' and peasants' councils.

Soviets became the basic organs of proletarian rule and the nucleus of the new state power.

The soviets represented the organized entry of the masses into the affairs of state. They provided a direct form for the expression and implementation of the will of the workers and peasants. Soviets are an historical standard against which we measure the new forms of rule created by revolutionary upheavals today.

Lenin also clarified the relationship of the new state apparatus to the economic foundation of society:

These measures refer to the state, to the purely political reconstruction of society; but, of course, they acquire their full meaning and significance only in connection with the "expropriation of the expropriators," either accomplished or in preparation, i.e., with the turning of capitalist private ownership of the means of production into social ownership.⁵

Here Lenin draws together the two criteria we have so far outlined, showing how the dismantling and replacement of the bourgeois power structure reaches its completion with the transformation of capitalist property relations.

In evaluating Nicaragua's state appa-

did not get under way until 1918.

In no workers' state established since the Soviet victory has the leadership been as swift as were the Bolsheviks. The workers' states in China and Cuba were established slowly, and even reluctantly, with the leadership denying, at the opening stages of the revolution and the assumption of power, their intent to achieve a socialist transformation.

The aims and orientation of the revolutionary leadership are crucial, because the degree of their socialist consciousness and program, *although not a prerequisite for overthrowing the capitalists*, becomes determinative at critical junctures and in finally consolidating the workers' dictatorship.

Hence an evaluation of the program, goals and direction of the Sandinistas helps us gauge the character, tendency, and likely development of the Nicaraguan state.

In light of the above, we seek to determine the class character of the Nicaraguan state by means of three criteria:

- 1) the degree of transformation of capitalist property relations
- 2) the degree of dismantling of the Somoza governmental apparatus, and the initiation of new institutions of state power
- 3) the asserted and actualized program and goals of the Sandinista leadership.

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experiencia acumulada vía los asaltos actuales del proletariado en contra de los Estados burgueses, y el consiguiente enriquecimiento de nuestra teoría. Al analizar la degeneración del primer Estado obrero, Trotsky demostró que a pesar de la subida de la burocracia estalinista, su destrucción de la democracia y la supresión política de la clase obrera, la URSS permaneció como una dictadura del proletariado en virtud de haber reemplazado las relaciones de propiedad capitalistas por la propiedad estatal de los medios de producción y el hecho de que el régimen fue forzado a defender la propiedad estatal como base de su existencia. El reconocimiento de Trotsky que éste es el criterio clave para determinar la naturaleza del Estado fue después amplificado por el movimiento mundial trotskista al intentar resolver las cuestiones teóricas y políticas presentadas por los Estados obreros de la Europa Oriental en la postsegunda guerra mundial.

Estos Estados, con la excepción de Yugoslavia, carecían de *cualquier* forma de organización propia de la clase obrera. El nuevo aparato estatal y la voltereta de las relaciones económicas fueron instituidas por la fuerza militar del Ejército Rojo. A través de estudios intensivos y del debate, se volvió claro (a todos, excepto a los revisionistas "capitalistas de Estado" del trotskismo) que las transformaciones en las relaciones de propiedad han resultado en Estados obreros, a pesar de su carácter *deformado* (a distinción de degenerado).

Por el otro lado, los regímenes populares revolucionarios que tomaron el poder en China y Cuba establecieron Estados obreros sólo hasta que esos regímenes llevaron a cabo la expropiación de los capitalistas. Sus intenciones originales eran las de instalar una democracia burguesa, pero la vida y el ímpetu revolucionario vencieron su errónea teoría de las "etapas".

Enraizada en lecciones históricas, nuestra investigación de Nicaragua comenzará con una valoración de las relaciones de propiedad ahí y cómo han cambiado desde la revolución e insurrección de 1979.

Además de la pregunta básica de "¿a quién pertenece qué?" necesitamos introducir dos otras preguntas:

Primera, ¿hasta qué grado el gobierno nicaragüense es realmente capaz de controlar, guiar y planear la economía? Su grado de control reflejará la extensión a la cual las relaciones de propiedad han sido de hecho transformadas.

El segundo punto económico es el de si el gobierno mantiene un *monopolio del comercio exterior*. ¿Prohíbe el Estado tratos privados empresariales con otros países? ¿controla y regula todas las interacciones entre la economía doméstica y el mercado internacional?

Trotsky insistía que ésta era una condición necesaria para la economía de un Estado obrero. El monopolio permite al Estado controlar los ingresos por exportaciones, y el hacer todas las decisiones al respecto del gasto de las divisas extranjeras en las importaciones. Todos los Estados obreros a la fecha han requerido del monopolio para poder sobrevivir en el mercado internacional dominado por los capitalistas, o sea el proteger la planificación nacional de la anarquía del mercado internacional.

Guiados por la elucidación marxista de los criterios económicos, revisaremos el carácter de la economía de Nicaragua, discerniremos las relaciones de propiedad dominantes, y así comenzaremos a rastrear la dinámica entre esas relaciones y el Estado.

El Aplastamiento del Aparato Estatal Burgués

Hace más de un siglo, Marx y Engels descubrieron la relación entre los fundamentos económicos del Estado y del aparato erigido para gobernar sobre de él.

Ellos observaron que el Estado burgués emplea un aparato que incluye fuerzas coercivas (ejército, policía y prisiones) así como cortes, leyes y burocracia.

Es importante el no confundir al Estado con el gobierno. El gobierno involucra la administración del Estado, y su

forma puede cambiar sin alterar el carácter esencial de clase del Estado. Los Estados burgueses, por ejemplo, tienen muchas variedades de gobiernos: democrático-burgueses, fascistas, dictaduras políticomilitares o monarquías constitucionales.

Marx encontró que las lecciones de la comuna de París probaron conclusivamente que el aparato estatal burgués, cualesquiera sus formas, era designado por el capital para gobernar sobre el trabajo, y que "la clase obrera no puede simplemente tomar control de la maquinaria estatal ya establecida y blanderla para sus propios propósitos".² En *Estado y Revolución*, Lenin elaboró sobre la necesidad de dismantelar completamente al viejo aparato gubernamental y reemplazarlo con nuevas formas propias de un Estado obrero. La destrucción del parlamentarismo burgués, el sistema legislativo de la democracia burguesa, es clave en este proceso. Lenin escribió:

El decidir cada pocos años cual miembro de la clase dominante va a reprimir y a



Eneacio Mejía/AP

oprimir al pueblo a través del parlamento—esta es la esencia real del parlamentarismo burgués...

El camino para escapar del parlamentarismo se encontrará, por supuesto, no en la abolición de las instituciones representativas y el principio electivo, sino en la conversión de las instituciones representativas de meros "talleres de charla" en cuerpos de trabajo...

El parlamentarismo venal y putrefacto de la sociedad burguesa es reemplazado en la comuna por instituciones en las cuales la libertad de opinión y discusión no degenera en el engaño, ya que los parlamentarios deben a su vez trabajar, ejecutar ellos mismos sus propias leyes y tienen que verificar sus propios resultados en la vida real, tienen que ser directamente responsables ante su electorado.³

Luego entonces, la clase obrera reemplaza al mecanismo parlamentarista pseudodemocrático de la burguesía, con nuevas formas que *combinan las funciones legislativas y ejecutivas* de gobierno, él que ejerce a plena vista del pueblo, y que es directamente responsable ante él.

Lenin enfatizó repetidamente que los oficiales gubernamentales deberían ser pagados al nivel de los salarios obreros. Tal escala de pagos los inocuaría en contra de la influencia burguesa, o sea de las tentaciones de los privilegios materiales.

El Estado obrero, decía Lenin, aboli-

ría también al ejército permanente y lo reemplazaría con una *milicia* consistente y controlada directamente por el pueblo mismo armado. Por medio de tales pasos, la sociedad daría saltos cualitativos de la "democracia" burguesa para la minoría de ricos a la democracia real de las mayorías.

Lenin insistía que cualesquiera sus diferencias en forma, la esencia del Estado obrero es en "la dictadura del proletariado, o sea, en la organización de la vanguardia de los oprimidos en clase gobernante con el propósito de triturar a los opresores."⁴ La dictadura del proletariado combina la primera democracia genuina para las mayorías pobres y oprimidas con la represión sistemática de los explotadores capitalistas. La represión es necesaria para ahogar su resistencia forzada y liberar a la humanidad de la esclavitud salarial.

La sociedad continuaría necesitando un gobierno clasista hasta que los antagonistas capitalistas fueran destruidos o neutralizados completamente.

Unas pocas semanas solamente después de que Lenin escribiera Estado y

quieran todo su significado sólo en conexión con la "expropiación de los expropiadores", ya lograda o en vías de lograrse, p. ej. con la conversión de los medios de producción en propiedad social.⁵

Aquí Lenin une los dos criterios que hemos perfilado, mostrando como el dismantelamiento y reemplazamiento de la estructura burguesa del poder alcanza su realización con la transformación de las relaciones capitalistas de propiedad.

Al evaluar al aparato estatal de Nicaragua, miraremos la evidencia de la destrucción del Estado somocista y examinaremos a las nuevas instituciones gobernantes, sopesando el grado al cual ellas constituyen un aparato estatal cualitativamente nuevo y diferente.

Programas y Metas de la Dirigencia

El tercer criterio para un Estado obrero es el carácter de la dirigencia.

El liderato es un factor primordial de la revolución al que hay que observar en términos de sus políticas, metas y dirección de movimiento de cara a cara con las transformaciones del gobierno y economía.

El criterio vital de liderazgo está anclado en la experiencia de La Revolución de Octubre, donde el programa socialista agresivo y las metas de los bolcheviques se resolvieron con la toma del poder por los soviets y el aplastamiento del aparato estatal capitalista para el establecimiento del Estado obrero. *La Unión Soviética en noviembre de 1917 era un Estado obrero a pesar del hecho de que las transformaciones de las relaciones capitalistas de propiedad no se iniciaron sino hasta 1918.*

En ningún Estado obrero establecido desde la victoria de los soviets, el liderazgo ha sido tan veloz como fue el de los bolcheviques. Los Estados obreros en China y Cuba fueron establecidos lentamente, y aún a regañadientes, con la

dirigencia negando en las etapas iniciales de la revolución y toma de poder, sus intenciones de establecer una transformación socialista.

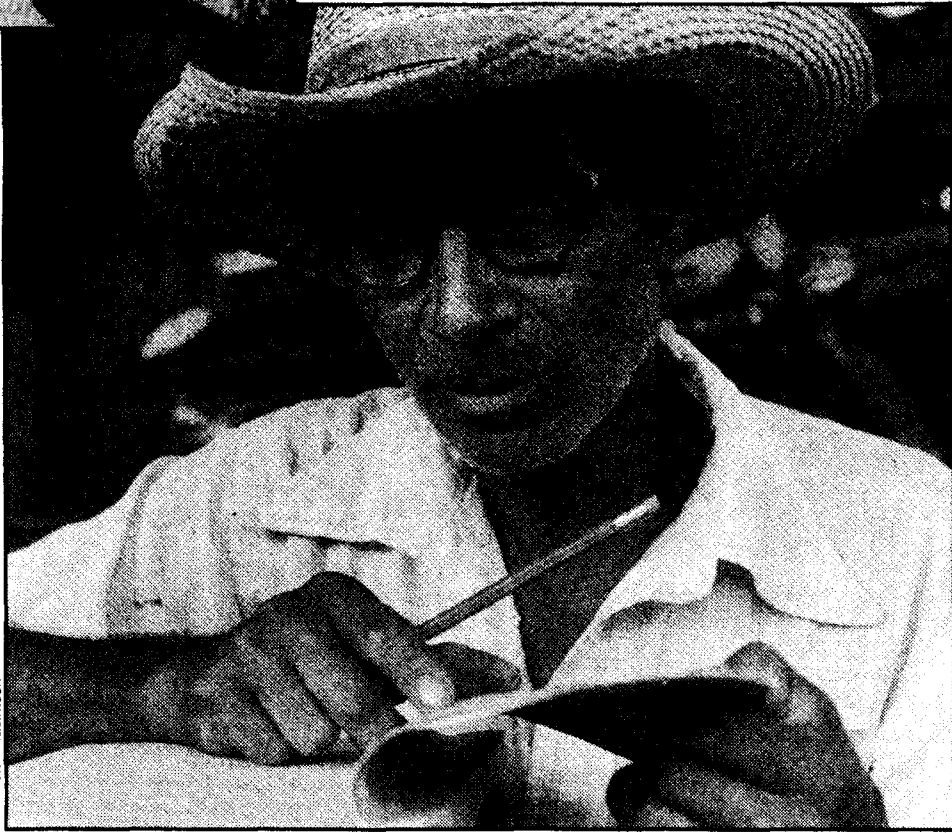
Los objetivos y orientación de la dirigencia revolucionaria eran cruciales, ya que el grado de su conciencia y programa socialista, *aunque sin ser un requisito previo para derrocar a los capitalistas*, se vuelve determinante en las coyunturas críticas y en la consolidación final de la dictadura de los trabajadores.

Así, una evaluación del programa, metas y dirección de los sandinistas nos ayuda a estimar el carácter, tendencia y posible desarrollo del Estado nicaragüense.

A la luz de lo anterior, buscamos determinar el carácter de clase del Estado nicaragüense por medio de tres criterios:

- 1) El grado de transformación de las relaciones capitalistas de propiedad.
- 2) El grado de dismantelamiento del aparato gubernamental somocista, y el comienzo de instituciones nuevas de poder del Estado.
- 3) El programa actualizado y sostenido y las metas del liderato sandinista.

a la página 9 del suplemento



Fiona Macintosh

The revolution brought Nicaragua's people hope for a new life through such efforts as the literacy campaign (below). But new life was impossible under capitalism—a fact the Sandinistas would not grasp. (Left) Sandinista Defense Minister Humberto Ortega and new president Chamorro.

La revolución trajo al pueblo de Nicaragua la esperanza de una nueva vida a través de esfuerzos tales como campañas de alfabetización (abajo). Pero la nueva vida fue imposible bajo el capitalismo—un hecho que los sandinistas no captarían. (Izquierda) El sandinista Ministro de Defensa Humberto Ortega y la nueva presidenta Chamorro.

Revolución, la historia proveyó una confirmación de sus palabras en la vida real. La clase obrera rusa triunfó en octubre de 1917 y estableció el primer Estado obrero. El aparato estatal del gobierno provisional fue destruido prontamente — el ejército, policía secreta, ministerios, дума (parlamento) y todo — y una forma nueva de gobernar emergió que era única al naciente Estado: Los soviets, o consejos de obreros y campesinos.

Los soviets se volvieron los órganos básicos del gobierno proletario y el núcleo del nuevo poder estatal.

Los soviets representaron la entrada organizada de las masas en los asuntos de Estado. Ellos proveyeron una forma directa para la expresión e implementación de la voluntad de los obreros y campesinos. Los soviets son un estándar histórico contra el cual medimos las nuevas formas de gobierno creadas por los levantamientos revolucionarios de hoy.

Lenin también aclaró la relación del nuevo aparato estatal con las bases económicas de la sociedad.

Estas medidas se refieren al Estado, a la reconstrucción puramente política de la sociedad; pero, por supuesto, ad-

In the final analysis—but not at the outset—the economic foundation of a state is key in determining its essential class character.

A workers' state is premised on the accomplished or ongoing transformation of capitalist property relations.

What is the Sandinistas' economic track record today, *eight years after the defeat of Somoza?*

Some Left groups, such as the Spartacist League, believe that the mere fact of capitalist economic dominance precludes designating Nicaragua as a workers' state. Other groups, such as the Fourth International (FI) majority, discount existing economic relations in determining the nature of the state because, in their estimation, Nicaragua's historic backwardness, and the merciless imperialist economic pressure on it, preclude immediate sweeping expropriations. For the FI majority, Sandinista policies are the best that can be effected to prepare the ground for eventual expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

Let us examine these contentions.

Mixed Economy in Operation

The Sandinistas instituted a "mixed economy"—an amalgam of collectivized and private property relations—as the basis for national economic reconstruction.

The mixed economy is intended, as stated in the Constitution, to serve *permanently* as the basis for economic development, notwithstanding the isolated comments of individual Sandinistas that it is actually a springboard to eventual collectivization of the means of production.

This course of economic development is in line with the Sandinistas' oft-stated desire for political harmony among all classes within the framework of national reconstruction.

The question is, do the Sandinistas see this national reconstruction as the basis for eventual elimination of the bourgeoisie, as asserted by various leftists and some FSLN leaders, or as an end in itself, as stated in the Constitution?

Contrary to popular notions, mixed economy is not an equal admixture of one part socialism to one part capitalism, but a formula for the protracted dominance of the capitalist sector.

Private property clearly predominates in Nicaragua (as we shall demonstrate), particularly in the key export and industrial sectors. Moreover, the state's ownership of a particular fragment of the economy does not automatically translate into an ability to control even that fragment, let alone the entire economy.

Because the state's holdings are a minority of the total economy, and not concentrated in either key or critically interconnected fields, state-owned Public Property Sector (APP) enterprises must buy their raw materials from capitalist businesses and send their products out to compete in the capitalist marketplace.

As Minister of Agriculture Jaime Wheelock openly states, the state enterprises are "new forms of social production where the laws of the market still strongly predominate."⁶ Market anarchy thwarts any attempt to plan or regulate production.

Planning in the socialist sense is not on the agenda in any event. The FSLN has hoped merely to direct "mixed" domestic development with the aim of ending imperialist domination of Nicaragua's economy. Their hopes have hinged first on obtaining credits and financing from "friendly" West European governments and workers' states, then plowing the monies into development of agricultural technique and domestic manufacturing industries. This development would provide greater employment and an expanded domestic market for Nicaraguan products and, by enhancing the productivity of labor, enable Nicaragua to compete on a par with the advanced countries in the world market.

Alas, as we shall see, the imperialist economic and military onslaught, and internal bourgeois sabotage, have blown the Sandinistas' hopes to smithereens.

The Somoza Economic Legacy

As in many other Third World countries, a chief characteristic of the Nicaraguan economy is its overwhelming dependence on international capital.

This dependence grows out of the dominance in production of agro-exports (agricultural products intended for sale in the world market). Production for export in turn necessitates a reliance on imported goods to feed and clothe the population, and fuel both agriculture and industrial production. In Nicaragua, the manufacturing industry depends on imports for machinery and even for raw materials.

The Somoza dictatorship caused a shift to export production in the late 1940s. By 1950, Nicaragua was self-sufficient in food and depended chiefly on coffee and gold exports for income. The majority (75%) of the population lived in rural areas and engaged in small-farm agriculture.

The introduction of cotton production for export changed all this. Nicaragua's economy boomed in the '50s with the expansion of cotton production; by the mid '60s, Nicaragua had the highest cotton yields per acre of any country in the world. But the price of this expansion was reduced production of food.

Peasants were forced en masse off their land so that large cotton estates could be established. And by 1955, Nicaragua was dependent on imports to feed its people.

Nicaragua began to develop industri-

with imported machinery to process imported raw materials.

Distorted by dependency on imports and exports, Nicaragua's economic growth was too paltry to bring the country out of social and political backwardness. Life expectancy in the mid-70s was one of the lowest in all Latin America.

lier.

Capital flight meanwhile took one and one-half billion dollars out of the country. Nicaragua was wracked by a food shortage, and earnings from agro-exports plummeted. Consequently, Nicaragua suffered a serious shortage of foreign currency, which has persisted since the over-



ally with the establishment, via World Bank funding, of the Central American Common Market in the '60s. The aim of the Market was to "develop" the region as a source of raw materials for export to the U.S., and as a sweatshop for the assembly of imported materials into finished products—chemicals, textiles, furniture, etc.—for export. Hence, industrial development, geared to export and the caprice of the international market, provided no basis for a sound and integrated system of domestic industrial development.

Nicaragua developed some light industry in manufacturing in the '60s—food processing and production of leather goods, textiles and furniture. These goods were largely produced by artisans and small manufacturers for export within Central America. Factories for production of chemicals, construction materials and metal products were built, all set up

Two-thirds of the rural population over 10 years of age was illiterate. The vast majority of people in the countryside was either totally landless or forced to combine subsistence farming on small plots of unproductive land with seasonal work on the large agricultural estates.

The national debt—owed mostly to U.S. banks—mushroomed in the 1970s to \$1.65 billion. At \$4,000 per family, it was larger than the entire national income in 1979.⁷ Inflation, and the international price drop for Nicaragua's basic agro-exports in the '70s, brought industrial development to a standstill.

The civil war that preceded Somoza's ouster not only took a high toll in human life (50,000 people were killed), but also decimated Nicaragua's economy. Somacista sabotage and damage to the economy amounted to \$485 million; production fell to levels of 17 years ear-

throw of Somoza.

The Sandinista regime inherited an undeveloped, dependent export economy, with no coordination or integration between its industrial, manufacturing and agricultural sectors, all of which had been seriously weakened in the civil war.

Economic Achievements of the Insurrection

The July 1979 Sandinista victory over Somoza represented the overthrow of the single largest capitalist proprietor in the country. The Governmental Junta of National Reconstruction (known by

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En el análisis final — pero no al principio — los cimientos económicos del Estado son la clave para determinar su carácter esencial de clase.

Un Estado obrero está basado en la premisa de haber logrado o estar en vías de transformar las relaciones capitalistas de producción.

¿Cuál es la huella económica dejada hoy en día por los sandinistas, ocho años después de la derrota de Somoza?

Algunos grupos de izquierda, tales como la Liga Espartacista, creen que el mero hecho del dominio económico capitalista, previene el designar a Nicaragua como un Estado obrero. Otros grupos, tales como la "mayoría" de la 4a internacional, descuentan las relaciones econó-

micas existentes al determinar la naturaleza del Estado porque, a su parecer, el atraso histórico de Nicaragua, y las despiadadas presiones económicas imperialistas en contra de ella, impiden expropiaciones inmediatas y amplias. Para los mayoritarios de la 4a internacional, las políticas sandinistas son lo mejor que se pudo efectuar para preparar el terreno para una eventual expropiación de la burguesía.

Examinemos estas opiniones contendientes.

Economía Mixta en Operación

Los sandinistas instituyeron una "economía mixta" — una amalgama de

relaciones de propiedad privada y colectivizada — como base para la reconstrucción económica nacional.

La economía mixta tiene como intención, como lo expresa la constitución, el servir *permanentemente* como base para el desarrollo económico, no obstante los comentarios aislados de algunos individuos sandinistas de que en verdad es un trampolín para la colectivización eventual de los medios de producción.

Esta ruta de desarrollo económico se alinea con el deseo enunciado a menudo por los sandinistas de armonía política entre las clases dentro del armazón de la reconstrucción nacional.

La pregunta es ¿ven los sandinistas esta reconstrucción nacional como la base para la eventual eliminación de la burguesía, como lo aseveran varios izquierdistas y algunos dirigentes del FSLN, o como un fin en sí mismo, como lo enuncia la constitución?

Contrariamente a nociones populares, la economía mixta no es una mezcla equitativa de una porción de socialismo con una de capitalismo, sino una fórmula para la prolongación del dominio del sector capitalista.

La propiedad privada domina claramente en Nicaragua (como habremos de demostrar), particularmente en las exportaciones clave en los sectores industriales. Aún más, la propiedad estatal de un fragmento particular de la economía no se traduce automáticamente en la habilidad de controlar aunque sea ese fragmento, menos aún toda la economía.

Ya que las posesiones del Estado son una minoría de la economía total, y no concentradas en cualesquiera de los campos clave críticamente interconectados, las empresas del Area de Propiedad del Pueblo (APP), de propiedad estatal, tienen que adquirir sus materias primas de los negocios capitalistas y enviar sus productos a competir en el mercado capitalista.

Como abiertamente lo declara el ministro de agricultura Jaime Wheelock, las empresas estatales son "formas nuevas de producción social donde las leyes del mercado predominan todavía fuertemente".⁶ La anarquía del mercado frustra cualquier intento de planear o regular la producción.

La planeación en el sentido socialista no está en la libreta de eventos. El FSLN ha tenido la esperanza de meramente dirigir el desarrollo "mixto" con el objetivo de terminar el dominio imperialista de la economía de Nicaragua. Sus esperanzas han girado primero en obtener créditos y financiamiento de gobiernos "amistosos" eurooccidentales y de Estados obreros, y luego invertir estos dineros en el desarrollo de la técnica agrícola e industrias manufactureras domésticas. Este desarrollo proveería un mayor empleo y un mercado doméstico expandido para los productos nicaragüenses y al incrementar la productividad del trabajo, permitir a Nicaragua competir al parejo con los países avanzados en el mercado mundial.

Pero sin embargo, como veremos, el violento ataque militar y económico imperialista, y el sabotaje interno burgués, han volado en pedazos las esperanzas sandinistas.

La Herencia Económica de Somoza

Tal como en muchos de los países del tercer mundo, un carácter principal de la economía nicaragüense es su abrumadora dependencia del capital internacional.

Esta dependencia surge del predominio de la producción de agroexportaciones (productos agrícolas dirigidos al mercado mundial). La producción para la exportación a su vez depende de bienes importados para alimentar y vestir a la población, y abastecer tanto la producción agrícola como industrial. En Nicaragua, la industria manufacturera depende de las importaciones de maquinaria y aún de materias primas.

La dictadura de Somoza causó un desplazamiento hacia la producción para

exportación al fin de los 1940's. Para 1950, Nicaragua era autosuficiente en alimentos y dependía principalmente de las exportaciones de café y oro de sus ingresos. La mayoría (75%) de la población vivía en áreas rurales y estaban ocupados en la agricultura de pequeña propiedad.

La introducción de la producción de algodón para exportar cambió todo lo anterior. La economía de Nicaragua prosperó durante los años 50's con la expansión de la producción de algodón; para la mitad de los 60's, Nicaragua tenía rendimientos más altos de algodón por hectárea que cualquier país del mundo. Pero el precio de esta expansión fue la disminución en la producción de alimentos.

Los campesinos fueron obligados a salir en masa de sus tierras para que las grandes fincas algodonerías pudieran ser establecidas. Para 1955, Nicaragua dependía de las importaciones para alimentar a su pueblo.

Nicaragua comenzó a desarrollarse industrialmente con el establecimiento, vía financiamiento por el banco mundial, del Mercado Común Centroamericano en los 60's. El objetivo del mercado era el "desarrollar" la región como fuente de materias primas de exportación para los EUA, y para la explotación del obrero en el ensamblaje de materiales de importación en productos terminados — productos químicos, textiles, muebles, etc. — para la exportación. Luego entonces, el desarrollo industrial, orientado a exportar y al capricho del mercado internacional, no proveyó una base para un sólido e integrado desarrollo industrial doméstico.

Nicaragua desarrolló algo de industria manufacturera ligera durante los 60's — procesado de alimentos y producción de bienes de cuero, textiles y muebles. Estos bienes eran producidos mayoritariamente por artesanos y pequeños fabricantes para exportar dentro de Centroamérica. Fueron construidas fábricas de productos químicos, materiales de construcción y productos metálicos, todas ellas instaladas con maquinaria importada para procesar materia prima importada.

Distorsionada por la dependencia de las importaciones y exportaciones, el crecimiento económico de Nicaragua fue demasiado magro para sacar al país del atraso político y social. La esperanza de vida en la mitad de los 70's era una de las más bajas de toda Latinoamérica. Dos terceras partes de la población rural arriba de 10 años de edad era analfabeta. La vasta mayoría del pueblo en las áreas rurales o era carente de tierras o era obligado a combinar la agricultura de subsistencia en parcelas pequeñas de tierra improductiva con el trabajo estacional en las grandes fincas agrícolas.

La deuda nacional — debida en su mayoría a bancos de los EUA — se incrementó desmesuradamente a 1,650 millones de dólares durante los 1970's. A \$4,000 por familia, era mayor que el ingreso nacional total de 1979.⁷ La inflación, y la caída de los precios internacionales de las agroexportaciones básicas durante los 70's, llevó al detenimiento del desarrollo industrial.

La guerra civil que precedió al despoamiento de Somoza no conllevó sólo una enorme cuota de vidas humanas (50,000 muertos), sino que también decimó a la economía de Nicaragua. El sabotaje somocista y el daño a la economía alcanzó los \$485 millones; la producción cayó a los niveles de hacía 17 años.

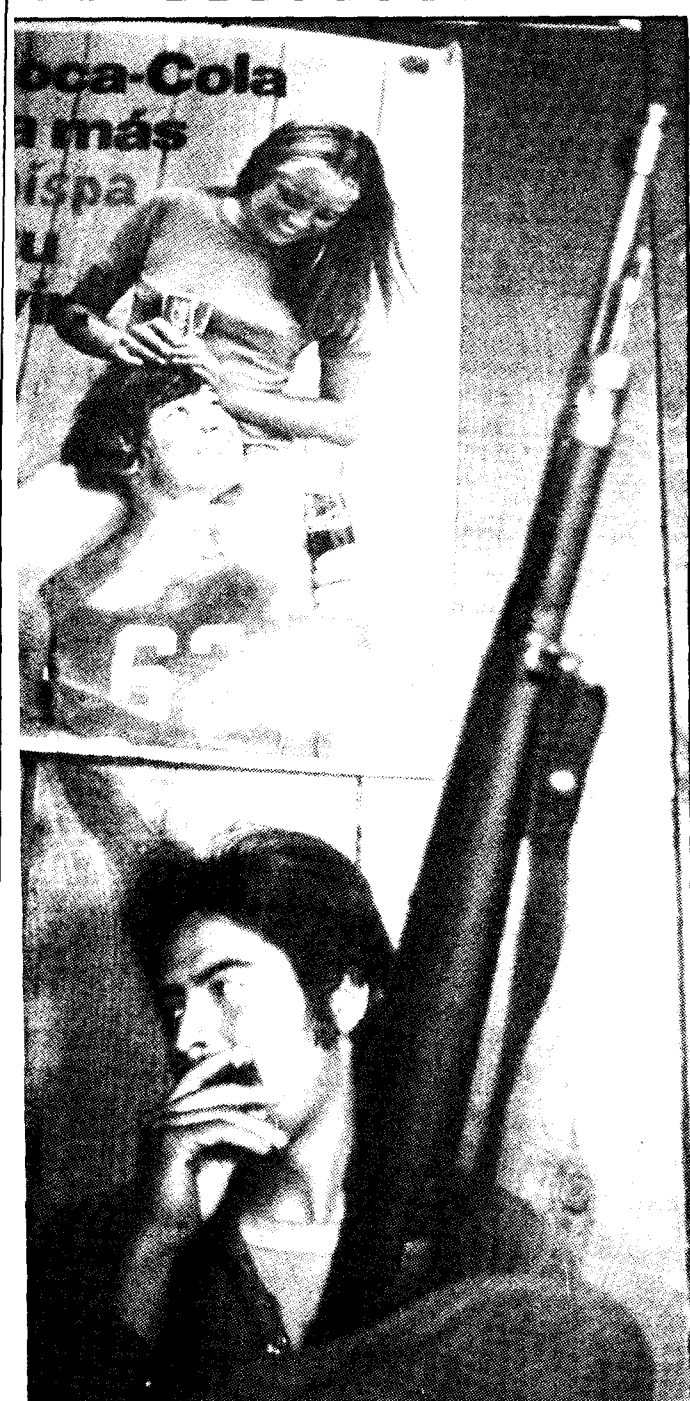
La fuga de capitales mientras tanto sacó 1,500 millones de dólares del país. Nicaragua estaba arruinada por el desabastecimiento de comida, y las ganancias por agroexportaciones se desplomaron. Consecuentemente, Nicaragua sufrió una seria escasez de divisas, la cual ha persistido desde el derrocamiento de Somoza.

El régimen sandinista heredó una economía subdesarrollada, dependiente de exportaciones, sin coordinación o integración entre sus sectores industriales, manufactureros y agrícolas, todos los cuales habían sido debilitados seriamente durante la guerra civil.

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Fiona Macintosh



Clockwise from upper right: tobacco farming collective of La Mia in Jalapa; Sandinista resting under a Coca-Cola ad; woman washing laundry in a Managua sewer, 1979; mural celebrating industrialization. Here displayed are the hopes, achievements, and burdens of the revolution. After the Somoza legacy of poverty, death, and imperialism, Nicaragua continued to drink coke while it struggled to build. Capitalists held onto industry and left it to rot. Peasants founded while big land owners made a comeback. And the yoke grew tighter.

Conforme a las manecillas del reloj, comenzando arriba a la derecha: Granja tabacalera colectiva "La Mia", en Jalapa: un sandinista reposando debajo de un anuncio de Coca-Cola; una mujer lavando ropa en un drenaje de Managua, 1979; un mural que celebra la industrialización. Aquí están manifestadas las esperanzas, logros y cargas a cuestas de la revolución. Después del legado de Somoza de pobreza, muerte e imperialismo, Nicaragua continuó bebiendo Coca-Cola al mismo tiempo que luchaba por construirse. Los capitalistas se aferraron a la industria y la dejaron pudrir. Los campesinos se atascaron, mientras los grandes terratenientes se recuperaron. Y el yugo se apretó más.

Table 1: Forms of Property in Nicaragua, 1982
By percentage of value of total production

Sector of Economy	Public*	Private Ownership			
		Total	Large	Med.	Small
Agriculture					
Export Agriculture	24%	76%	37%	22%	17%
Domestic Market	16%	84%	15%	8%	62%
Cattle	25%	75%	11%	30%	34%
Agro-industry	28%	72%	64%	6%	2%
Manufacturing	31%	69%	33%	22%	14%
Fishing	72%	28%	—	—	28%
Mining, Energy, Water	100%	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ALL SECTORS	37%	63%	25%	18%	20%

*State-owned enterprises, including state farms

Table 2: Changes in Land Ownership in Nicaragua, 1978-1985

Type of Ownership	Before the Revolution	After the Revolution		
	1978	1980	1983	1985
Private Property - Total	100%	81%	74%	74%
Big Landowners (over 35 acres)	52%	35%	27%	24%
Small & Middle (includes credit & service associations)	48%	64%	46%	50%
Peasant Production Coops	—	1%	5%	9%
State Farms	—	18%	21%	17%

its Spanish acronym JGRN) immediately nationalized all of Somoza's holdings, as well as those of his close associates and National Guard officers, under the state-owned APP.

The state thus took immediate possession of 25% of Nicaragua's industrial plants—168 factories that produced plastics, timber, foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals, construction materials, paper, metal products and machinery. These factories employed about one-fifth of Nicaragua's 65,000 industrial workers.⁸

The initial seizures also included 2 million acres of land, three-quarters of which was productive farm or ranch acreage.

Also, the revolutionary government immediately nationalized the finance sector, including all banks, foreign currency exchanges, and insurance companies, which were completely bankrupt. The government also took over waterways, forests, electrical power sources and mines.

While these nationalizations represented a significant proportion of the economy, Somoza's holdings proved to be smaller than the Sandinistas had anticipated, a fact which left the government in control of a smaller portion of the means of production than they anticipated prior to the insurrection.

Moreover, these acquisitions had been chosen for their profitability, not for their potential to serve as a nucleus for planning and re-building the economy. The new APP property was not focused in major industries, such as the chemical and oil refining industries, but scattered randomly, with no intrinsic connection among them or their products.

Property Shifts 1980-1987

The key to assessing the advances made in transforming property relations is to determine who owns what today. Table I shows this informa-

tion, based on the public vs. private percentages of total production values in 1982.^{9, 10}

The largest and most important sectors of the economy are export agriculture, agro-industry and manufacturing. These sectors generate the foreign exchange which is the lifeblood of the dependent Nicaraguan economy. In each of these areas, private ownership accounts for the large majority of production (between 69% and 76%), and the large owners dominate in each category.

Agro-exports

Nicaragua remains highly dependent on the income from agro-exports, which through 1986 were led by cotton, followed closely by coffee and beef. According to Colburn, the big capitalists, who dominate agro-exports, own an even larger chunk of the most important export crops, producing 62% of the cotton and 55% of the coffee. The state produces only 20% of the cotton and 15% of the coffee. Additional information on land ownership and the effect of agrarian reform will be discussed below.

Agro-industry

This sector includes the industrial wing of agriculture, such as sugar, coffee and cotton mills, chemicals for agricultural use, and slaughterhouses. Nearly two-thirds of agro-industrial production is controlled by large private capital, with the state accounting for 28% and small producers in control of only a tiny fraction.

Manufacturing

Private ownership also dominates in manufacturing, with a roughly equal three-way division between government

enterprises, large capitalists and small/medium producers. The state has more extensive holdings in textiles, wood products, minerals and metal products, while the private sector is the chief producer of food and tobacco products, shoes, rubber and chemical products, printing, and machinery, including electrical and transport equipment.

An unusually high percentage of manufacture is carried out in workshops or cottage industry (i.e., small/medium producers). The number of these producers of food, wood, leather and simple metal and plastic products has increased since the insurrection.

Fishing, Mining, Energy, Water

These sectors are controlled largely or entirely by the government. They contribute much less to the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than the areas outlined above, though ownership of energy sources is critical to controlling industry. The government nationalized the waterways, but private enterprise completely controls surface transportation.

Land Ownership and Agrarian Reform

Before the 1979 insurrection, agriculture was in private hands. Table II summarizes the changes in agricultural property relations between 1978 and 1985.¹¹

The holdings taken from Somoza and other large landowners were converted primarily into state farms, which totaled 18% of all arable land.

Between 1980 and 1983, an additional 8% of the large landowners were expropriated. These holdings were mostly land that was abandoned or allowed to lie fallow. It was divided primarily between

the state farms and voluntary peasant cooperatives, in line with the government's plans for development through heavy investment in state farms.¹²

Comparison of the figures for 1983 and 1985 reflects a change in the pattern of agrarian reform. An additional 3% of the land was taken from the large land-

owners, but remained within the private sphere, being turned over to individual middle and small peasants. At the same time, the state sector declined from 21% to 17%; the dismantled public property was given to peasants as private holdings.

Shift of agricultural land holdings from the state to the private sector re-

flects a change in both Sandinista policy and the class forces in the countryside. Immediately following the insurrection, the Sandinista government promoted development of production cooperatives and the APP as the basis for transforming agriculture. Peasants receiving land grants during the first period after the insurrection were required to join cooperatives.

Even as it espoused this policy, however, the government contradicted and undercut this socialization process by choosing a very cautious course in land reform to placate the bourgeoisie. This course, which includes restricting the peasants' own efforts to take the land, and returning some seized estates to the large landowners, has accelerated in past years.

Peasant resistance to collectivization, and problems in managing the APP, contributed to the abandonment of the plan to expand the public sector, assuring the continued dominance of private enterprise in agriculture.

Since 1984, the government has increased the distribution of land to landless peasants. But these land grants are being made largely at the expense of the state sector. Meanwhile, many state farms have been turned over to peasant cooperatives or broken up into smaller, privately held units, a trend that is continuing.¹³

Some peasants are organizing production cooperatives (especially in the frontier regions, to protect production from contra assaults). But the process has degenerated overall, and many cooperatives are in disarray. Cooperative owners often hire wage labor to increase their individual income. They also resist reinvesting profits to build the cooperatives; this is especially true where production cooperatives compete with large landowners in the agro-export sector.

In summary, the trend in agrarian property relations is the shifting from large public and private property to small private holdings in the sectors where food for domestic consumption is produced. Meanwhile, large private landowners dominate agro-export production.

The state sector in land ownership has *declined* in the past three years.

Government vs. a Hostile Bourgeoisie

While the capitalists have retained economic clout, they remain exceedingly hostile to the revolution. This hostility has been met consistently with conciliation.

During the civil war and in the period immediately following the insurrection, the panicked bourgeoisie responded by curtailing production and sending massive funds outside the country. They also hoarded profits rather than ploughing them back into production; investments in productive enterprises dropped from 11% in 1977 to 2% in 1982.¹⁴

The measures taken by the capitalists, particularly in industry, amount to conscious economic civil war. Marxist economist John Weeks notes:

From the outset, the landlords and capitalists organized themselves to undermine the effort for economic reconstruction. In the political

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Logros Económicos de la Insurrección

La victoria sandinista de 1979 sobre Somoza representó el derrocamiento del propietario individual capitalista más grande del país. La Junta de Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional (JGRN) nacionalizó inmediatamente todas las posesiones de Somoza, así como aquellas de sus asociados cercanos y de los oficiales de la Guardia Nacional, bajo el control de la APP de propiedad estatal.

El Estado tomó así posesión inmediata del 25% de la planta industrial de Nicaragua — 168 fábricas que producían plásticos, madera, alimentos, productos farmacéuticos, materiales de construcción, papel, productos metálicos y maquinaria. Estas fábricas empleaban cerca de una quinta parte de los 65,000 obreros industriales nicaragüenses.⁸

Las incautaciones iniciales también incluyeron 800,000 hectáreas de tierras, tres cuartas partes de las cuales eran superficies agropecuarias productivas.

También, el gobierno revolucionario inmediatamente nacionalizó al sector financiero, incluyendo todos los bancos, las transacciones de divisas, y compañías aseguradoras, las cuales estaban en completa bancarrota. El gobierno también se incautó de las vías acuáticas, bosques, fuentes de energía eléctrica y minas.

Aunque estas nacionalizaciones representaban una proporción significativa de la economía, las posesiones de Somoza resultaron ser una proporción menor de los medios de producción de lo que era anticipado con anterioridad a la insurrección.

Aún más, estas adquisiciones habían sido escogidas por ser lucrativas, no por su potencial para servir como núcleo para planear y reconstruir la economía. La nueva propiedad APP no fue enfocada a las industrias principales, tal como la química y de refinación petrolera, sino desperdigadas al azar sin conexión intrínseca entre ellas o sus productos.

Cambios en la Propiedad 1980-1987

La clave para ponderar los avances hechos en la transformación de las relaciones de propiedad es la de determinar a quién pertenece qué hoy en día.

La tabla I muestra esta información, basada en los porcentajes de los valores de producción pública vs. privada en 1982.^{9,10}

Los sectores más grandes e importantes de la economía son la agricultura de exportación, la agroindustria y la manufacturera. Estos sectores generan las divisas extranjeras que son el fluido vital de la dependiente economía nicaragüense. En cada una de estas áreas, la propiedad privada representa la mayoría de la producción (entre el 69% y el 76%), y los grandes propietarios dominan en cada categoría.

Agroexportaciones

Nicaragua sigue siendo altamente dependiente en sus ingresos de las agroexportaciones, las cuales hasta 1986 fueron encabezadas por el algodón, seguido de cerca por café y carne vacuna. De acuerdo con Colburn, los grandes capitalistas, que dominan las agroexportaciones,

son dueños de una parte aún más grande de los cultivos de exportación más importantes, produciendo el 62% del algodón y el 55% del café. El Estado produce sólo 20% del algodón y 15% del café. Más información sobre la propiedad de la tierra y el efecto de la reforma agraria será discutida a continuación.

Agroindustria

Este sector incluye a el ala industrial de la agricultura, tal como ingenios azucareros y plantas cafetaleras y algodonearas, mataderos y productos agroquímicos. Cerca de dos tercios de la producción agroindustrial está controlada por el gran capital privado, con el Estado representando el 28% y los pequeños productores en control de sólo una diminuta fracción.



Textile factory, Managua. State industries suffered when subsidies shifted to the private sector. Fábrica Textil, Managua. Las industrias estatales sufrieron cuando los subsidios fueron transferidos al sector privado.

Manufacturas

La propiedad privada también domina en las manufacturas, con una división en aproximadamente tres partes, entre empresas gubernamentales, grandes capitalistas y medianos y pequeños productores. El Estado tiene más posesiones extensas en los textiles, productos madereros, y productos minerales y metálicos, mientras que el sector privado es el principal productor de productos alimenticios y tabacaleros, calzado, productos de hule (caucho) y químicos, impresiones y maquinaria, incluyendo equipos eléctricos y de transporte.

Un porcentaje altamente inusual de las manufacturas se lleva a cabo en talleres o industria casera (v.g. productores medianos y pequeños). El número de productores de alimentos, madera, cueros y productos simples de metal y plásticos se ha incrementado desde la insurrección.

Pesca, Minería, Energía, Agua

Estos sectores están controlados grandemente o enteramente por el gobierno. Ellos contribuyen mucho menos al total del Producto Doméstico Bruto (PDB) que las áreas perfiladas anteriormente, aunque la propiedad de las fuentes energéticas es crítica para el control de la industria. El gobierno nacionalizó las vías acuáticas, pero la empresa privada controla totalmente el transporte de superficie.

La Propiedad de la Tierra y la Reforma Agraria

Antes de la insurrección de 1979, la agricultura se encontraba en manos pri-

tro de la esfera privada, al ser entregada a medianos y pequeños campesinos individuales. Al mismo tiempo, el sector estatal declinó del 21% al 17%; la propiedad pública desmantelada fue dada a campesinos en propiedad privada.

Los desplazamientos de las posesiones de tierra agrícola del Estado hacia el sector privado reflejan un cambio tanto en la política sandinista como en las fuerzas de clase en áreas rurales. Inmediatamente después de la insurrección, el gobierno sandinista promovió el desarrollo de las cooperativas de producción y el APP como la base para la transformación del agro. Los campesinos a los que se les otorgó tierras, se les requirió que se unieran a cooperativas.

Aún cuando abrazaba estas políticas, el gobierno, sin embargo, contradecía y socavaba este proceso de socialización, al escoger una ruta precavida de reforma agraria para aplacar a la burguesía. Este rumbo, el cual incluye el restringir los esfuerzos propios de los campesinos de tomar tierras, y la devolución a algunos grandes terratenientes de algunas de las fincas incautadas, se ha acelerado en los años recientes.

La resistencia campesina a la colectivización, y los problemas administrativos del APP, contribuyeron al abandono del plan de expandir al sector público, asegurando el dominio continuado de la empresa privada en el agro.

Desde 1984, el gobierno ha incrementado la distribución de tierras a campesinos sin ellas. Pero estos otorgamientos se han hecho en su mayoría a costa del sector estatal. Mientras tanto, muchas fincas estatales han sido entregadas a cooperativas campesinas o divididas en unidades menores, de propiedad privada, una tendencia que continúa.¹³

Algunos campesinos están organizando cooperativas de producción (especialmente en las regiones fronterizas, para proteger la producción de los ataques de la contra). Pero el proceso ha degenerado en conjunto, y muchas de las cooperativas se encuentran de capa caída. Los propietarios cooperativistas contratan seguido trabajadores asalariados para incrementar sus ingresos individuales. También se resisten en reinvertir sus ganancias para la construcción de las cooperativas; esto es especialmente verdadero donde las cooperativas de producción compiten con grandes terratenientes en el sector de agroexportaciones.

En resumen, la tendencia en las relaciones de propiedad agraria es la del desplazamiento de la gran propiedad estatal y privada a posesiones privadas en pequeño en los sectores donde los alimentos para consumo doméstico son producidos. Mientras tanto, los grandes terratenientes privados dominan la producción de agroexportación.

El sector estatal en la propiedad de la tierra ha declinado en los tres pasados años.

El Gobierno vs. una Burguesía Hostil

Mientras los capitalistas han retenido canilla económica, siguen siendo excesivamente hostiles a la revolución. Esta hostilidad ha sido enfrentada consistentemente con la conciliación.

Durante la guerra civil y el periodo **a la página 13 del suplemento**

Tabla 1: Formas de Propiedad en los Sectores Productivos de la Economía Nicaragüense Por porcentajes del valor de la producción total

Sector Económico	Pública*	Propiedad Privada			
		Total	Grande	Mediana	Pequeña
Agricultura					
Exportación	24%	76%	37%	22%	17%
Doméstica	16%	84%	15%	8%	62%
Ganado	25%	75%	11%	30%	34%
Agroindustria	28%	72%	64%	6%	2%
Manufacturas	31%	69%	33%	22%	14%
Pesca	72%	28%	—	—	28%
Minas, Energía, Agua	100%	—	—	—	—
TOTALES	37%	63%	25%	18%	20%

*Empresas que pertenecen al Estado, incluyendo granjas estatales

Tabla 2: Cambios en la Propiedad de la Tierra en Nicaragua

Tipo de Propiedad	Pre Revolución	Post Revolución		
	1978	1980	1983	1985
Propiedad Privada - Total	100%	81%	74%	74%
Grandes Terratenientes (más de 140 hectareas)	52%	35%	27%	24%
Medianos y Pequeños (incluye asociaciones de crédito y servicio)	48%	64%	46%	50%
Cooperativas Campesinas de Producción	—	1%	5%	9%
Granjas Estatales	—	18%	21%	17%

sphere this opposition would eventually result in counter-revolutionary insurgency. In the economic sphere, the capitalists used their control over production to undermine the Sandinista-led coalition government. In manufacturing, the capitalists pursued a clandestine war against the state.¹⁵

The bourgeoisie's calculated sabotage has been acknowledged by individual owners who admitted to coming under extreme pressure from fellow capitalists, or being offered bribes (in U.S. dollars) to refuse any loans or individual undertakings that would expand production.¹⁶

Concerned with the scarcity of goods caused by the drop in production and reinvestment, the government responded in two ways:

First, it substituted its own resources, ploughing up to 20% of the Gross Domestic Product into new production. About half of this investment has gone via subsidies to the private sector.

This degree of state investment has been impossible to sustain, however, especially given the heavy cost of the contra war.

Second, the government has tried to use a variety of indirect means to try to cajole the bourgeoisie into cooperative economic behavior.

After the insurrection, the Sandinistas declared that all foreign trade would be carried out under government auspices. However, having nationalized only a fragment of export production, and politically unwilling to risk the uproar of instituting a monopoly of foreign trade, the FSLN had to fall back on indirect methods of regulation, contracts and licensing to maintain even partial control.

These measures included favorable rates of exchange, tax credits, and loans for private exporters, and devaluation of the Nicaraguan cordoba, which makes exports more attractive on the international market.

The government, moreover, allows the exporters to be paid off in foreign currency, especially U.S. dollars. But the exporters plough these dollars—far more attractive than the cordoba on the international market—into the purchase of foreign goods, which they resell profitably in the private market. Hence dollar incentives, and the government's refusal to institute a monopoly of foreign trade, *weaken*, rather than strengthen, its margin of economic control.

Despite the gains of the private sector in recent years, however, a large proportion of capitalist enterprises continues to underproduce and withhold reinvestment capital. Additionally, some businesses evade state control and increase their profit margin by deliberately ceasing production of price-regulated goods and developing instead new product lines for which there are no govern-

ment regulations.

Evidently, conciliation isn't enough; the Sandinistas, despite their collaborationist policies, remain the representatives of a *revolutionary* people, and hence a threat, if only potentially, to private property.

Local and international bourgeois hostility has further drained the economy: The U.S. continues to promote an embargo on international credit and goods.

Then there is the contra war; economic losses from this war had reached \$1.3 billion by mid-1986 and have climbed higher since then. Defense expenditures—over 60% of the national budget—have necessitated curtailment or abandonment of necessary internal development projects. The war has exacerbated food shortages, inflation, and the ravagement of social services.

That Nicaragua has not yet succumbed to this onslaught—that it still fights after nine hellish years—is amazing testament to the revolution's power of persistence.

Meanwhile, the government's ongoing favoritism toward the big capitalists generates friction between the classes and criticism of FSLN policy.

Nicaraguan journalist William Grigsby, writing recently in the pro-Sandinista newspaper *Nuevo Diario*, was sharply critical of the government's economic strategy. He pointed out that "The big private landowners have received great incentives, including cash, but the small and middle-sized farmers have been hard hit by a shortage of consumer goods and basic tools."¹⁷

The grievances of the middle peasantry, resistant to collectivization and squeezed by the agro-export industry, have been partly assuaged by concessions in land reform policies. But growing hardships afflicting the urban working class, who are heaviest hit, especially by inflation, have not been assuaged.

Government policies, such as devaluing the cordoba and providing credits and loans to big producers, have served to prop up capitalist profits at the expense of salaried workers and people living on fixed incomes. Despite government approval of wage increases, devaluation of the cordoba provoked a steep rise in inflation and therefore a steady fall in real wages. Wages dropped to 47% of their 1977 levels by 1985.¹⁸ And this trend continued to accelerate in 1987, when inflation was estimated to be as high as 700%.¹⁹

The Informal Sector: The Black Market

The widespread scarcity of goods, and the decline in real wages, have fostered development of "informal" small commerce, over which the state has no direct control and from which it receives no revenue. This "informal sector" is in essence a black market. And its existence is fueled by speculation—buying of government-subsidized or controlled goods and then reselling them at a high rate of profit.

How does this speculation work? The government establishes price controls for

The government is trying to reverse this trend by distributing land to the peasants. It announced in 1986 that all funds for social services, education and health would be allocated to the rural areas, especially regions hit hardest by the contras.

Nicaragua's serious problems with the productivity and availability of labor are directly related to the lack of adequate wage incentives and the attraction of black market profits. **Forty-five percent** of the economically active population in Managua is involved in the black market, and even more supplement their salaried or wage-earning positions with income from the black market.

Since 1980, Sandinista leaders recognized that informal commerce was the most rapidly growing sector of the economy. But, despite a variety of measures to bring the black market under control, it has now reached crisis proportions.

For example, laws were passed in 1986 forcing merchants to use bank drafts in cordobas for all substantial commercial transactions. Yet Nicaraguan economists estimate that the government now controls only 25% of the dollars in circulation on the black market.

The FSLN has recently announced plans to mobilize support for a clamp-down on the black market through neighborhood inspection teams. But such efforts can achieve little as long as government policies drive the people into the black market to survive.

The dynamics of the black market and its enormity starkly reveal that in the Nicaraguan economy, capitalist economic relations and laws hold sway. The state, falling far short of being able to plan

and control the economy (even as they do in the Soviet Union and China), is reduced to increasingly ineffectual mediation of the powerful forces of the marketplace. This is the inexorable fate of an isolated economy surrounded and impacted by the world capitalist system.

Summary of the Economic Front

State-owned enterprises today account for 37% of the Gross Domestic Product (an increase from an estimated 11-15% state sector in the two years just prior to the insurrection).

Let us put this transformation into perspective.

Nicaragua, while significantly increasing its nationalized sector, still has a smaller percentage of publicly owned property than did Chile under Allende, Argentina under Peron, or Mexico and Brazil today. Land reform in Nicaragua, while impressive, is still similar to that in capitalist Latin American countries, and is compatible with capitalist development.

Moreover, the dominance of the big bourgeoisie in Nicaragua is particularly evident in precisely those areas that are the productive heart of the economy—agro-exports and the industrial sector.

Most significant is the fact that there has been **no substantive growth of the public sector** since the first tide of nationalizations in 1980. In fact, there has been a mild erosion of the state sector of agriculture in favor of small and middle peasants.

The hegemony of the capitalist marketplace, the enormous difficulty of the government in exercising even limited control of the economy, its refusal to monopolize foreign trade, and the runaway growth of the black market are the direct result of governmental refusal to lay the political and economic groundwork for expropriation of the fundamentally hostile bourgeoisie.

Further, despite the myriad programs of the government, production as a whole has not regained pre-insurrectionary levels. The GDP in 1985 actually fell 4.8%.²¹

This statistic attests that conciliationism is a dismal *economic* policy, as well as a politically treacherous **to supplement page 14**



Managua street vendor. Economic hemorrhage fostered the black market. Vendedora callejera en Managua. La hemorragia económica fomentó al mercado negro.

beans, a dietary staple. It offers 180 cordobas a pound to farmers to produce beans. However, the growers are able to sell beans for 280 cordobas to speculators, who then smuggle them into the cities and re-sell them for 600 cordobas and more.

In 1986, 92% of the bean crop was sold privately, making it virtually impossible to buy beans anywhere except on the black market.²⁰

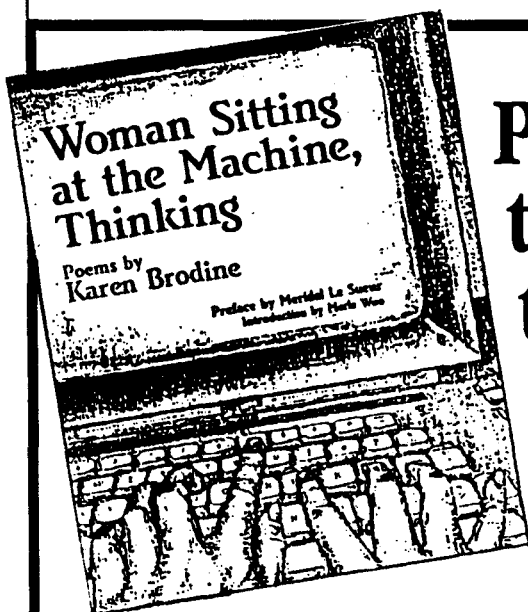
Also bolstering the black market are the incentives in U.S. dollars given to the agro-exporters (and, since last year, to artisans who produce for export). Designed to stimulate production and invigorate the "mixed economy," the incentive policy actually reduces the state's economic control and bleeds the consumer. This policy floods the domestic market with high-priced, dollar-purchased, illegally imported consumer goods, which siphon off dollar reserves and therefore limit vitally needed reinvestment in domestic production.

The black market is often the only place that scarce commodities, from luxury items to such basics as toothpaste and shampoo, can be purchased.

So the black market flourishes. In addition to consumer items, the black market also supports an illegal trade of imported raw materials for Nicaragua's manufacturing sector.

A final factor in the black market's growth is that many people have found they can make far more money by speculating, or selling crafted items or bootlegged imports, than by holding a job at fixed wage levels. This is true even of skilled professionals and technicians. Because of the drain of people from the latter spheres, wage scales for professionals and technicians were raised disproportionately in 1986. This wage hike effectively killed the previous policy of reducing the wage differential between the highest and lowest paid workers.

Overall, there has been a reduction in the number of salaried urban workers, as many have shifted to the informal sector to make a living. At the same time, a labor shortage exists in both the state and private agro-export sectors, due to low agricultural wages and continued migration from rural areas to Managua as workers search for liveable incomes.



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inmediatamente posterior a la insurrección, la burguesía en pánico respondió recortando la producción y enviando fondos masivos fuera del país. También atesoraron las ganancias en vez de reinvertirlas en la producción; las inversiones en las empresas productivas decayeron del 11% en 1977 al 2% en 1982.¹⁴

Las medidas tomadas por los capitalistas, particularmente en la industria, vienen a ser una guerra civil económica. El economista marxista John Weeks observa:

Desde el inicio, los hacendados y capitalistas se organizaron para menoscabar el esfuerzo de reconstrucción económica. En la esfera política esta oposición resultaría eventualmente en la insurgencia contrarrevolucionaria. En la esfera económica, los capitalistas usaron su control sobre la producción para menoscabar al gobierno de coalición encabezado por los sandinistas. En las manufacturas, los capitalistas persiguieron una guerra clandestina contra el Estado.¹⁵

El sabotaje calculado de la burguesía ha sido reconocido por propietarios individuales, los que han admitido estar sujetos a extremas presiones de colegas capitalistas, o a haber sido ofrecidos sobornos (en dólares EUA) para rechazar cualquier préstamo o empresa individual que expandiera la producción.¹⁶

Preocupado por la carestía de bienes causada por la caída en la producción y reinversión, el gobierno respondió de dos formas:

Primera, substituyó sus propios recursos, reinvertiendo hasta el 20% del Producto Doméstico Bruto en nueva producción. Cerca de la mitad de esta inversión ha ido a parar vía subsidios al sector privado.

Este grado de inversión estatal ha sido imposible de sostener, sin embargo, especialmente dado el pesado costo de la guerra de los contras.

Segunda, el gobierno ha intentado usar una variedad de medios indirectos para tratar de engatusar a la burguesía para que observe un comportamiento de cooperación económica.

Después de la insurrección, los sandinistas declararon que todo el comercio exterior se llevaría a cabo bajo los auspicios del gobierno. Sin embargo, habiendo nacionalizado solamente un fragmento de la producción de exportación, y políticamente indispuerto a arriesgar un alboroto al instituir un monopolio del comercio exterior, el FSLN tuvo que retractarse a métodos indirectos de regulación, contratos y licenciamiento para mantener aunque sea un control parcial.

Estas medidas incluyen las tasas de cambio de divisas, deducciones tributarias, préstamos para los exportadores privados, y la devaluación del córdoba nicaragüense, lo cual hace a las exportaciones más atractivas en el mercado internacional.

El gobierno, aún más, permite a los exportadores de ser pagados en divisas, especialmente en dólares EUA. Pero los exportadores invierten esos dólares — mucho más atractivos que el córdoba en el mercado internacional — en la compra de bienes extranjeros, los cuales revenden con ganancias en el mercado privado. Por lo tanto los incentivos en dólares, y la negación del gobierno de instituir un monopolio del comercio exterior, **debilita**, en vez de fortalecer, este margen de control económico.

A pesar de los avances del sector privado en los años recientes, todavía una gran proporción de las empresas capitalistas continúa la subproducción y la retención de capital de reinversión. Además, algunos negocios evaden el control estatal y aumentan su margen de ganancias cesando deliberadamente la producción de bienes con precios regulados y desarrollando en vez nuevas líneas de producción para las cuales no hay reglamentos gubernamentales.

Evidentemente, la conciliación es insuficiente; los sandinistas, a pesar de sus políticas colaboracionistas, siguen siendo los representantes de un pueblo **revolucionario**, por lo tanto una amenaza, aunque sólo potencial, a la propiedad privada.

La hostilidad burguesa local e internacional ha drenado aún más la economía: Los EUA continúan promoviendo un embargo de créditos y bienes.

Luego, también, está la guerra de los contras; las pérdidas económicas de esta guerra han alcanzado 1,300 millones de dólares para la mitad de 1986, y se han elevado aún más desde entonces. Los gastos de defensa — arriba de 60% del presupuesto nacional — han necesitado recortes o abandono de proyectos internos de desarrollo necesarios. La guerra ha exacerbado la carestía de alimentos, la inflación, y destrozado los servicios sociales.

El que Nicaragua no haya sucumbido este violento ataque — y que todavía luche después de nueve años infernales — es un testamento sorprendente del poder de persistencia de la revolución.

Mientras tanto, el favoritismo actual del gobierno hacia los capitalistas genera fricción entre las clases y crítica a las políticas del FSLN.

El periodista William Grigsby, escribiendo recientemente en el periódico prosandinista *Nuevo Diario*, fue agudamente crítico de la estrategia económica del gobierno. El señaló que: "Los grandes terratenientes privados han recibido fuertes incentivos, incluyendo dinero en efectivo, pero los agricultores medianos y en pequeño han sido golpeados por la escasez de bienes de consumo y herramientas básicas".¹⁷

Los agravios del campesinado medio, resistente a la colectivización y estrujado por la industria agroexportadora, han sido mitigados parcialmente por medio de concesiones en las políticas de reforma agraria. Pero las crecientes dificultades que afligen a la clase obrera urbana, que es la más golpeada, especialmente por la inflación, no han sido mitigadas.

Las políticas del gobierno, tales como el devaluar el córdoba y el proveer créditos y préstamos a los grandes productores, han servido para apuntalar el lucro capitalista a costa de los trabajadores asalariados y de la gente que vive de ingresos fijos. A pesar de la aprobación del gobierno de incrementos de sueldos, la devaluación del córdoba provocó un incremento pronunciado en la inflación y por lo tanto una caída de los salarios reales. Los sueldos cayeron al 47% de sus niveles en 1977 para 1985.¹⁸ Y esta tendencia continuó acelerándose en 1987 cuando la inflación era estimada de ser tan alta como del 700%.¹⁹

El Sector Informal: El Mercado Negro

La amplia carestía de bienes, y la disminución de los salarios reales, han promovido el desarrollo del pequeño comercio "informal", sobre el cual el Estado no tiene control directo y del cual no recauda impuestos. Este "sector informal" es en esencia el mercado negro. Y su existencia es alimentada por la especulación — la compra de bienes subsidiados o controlados por el gobierno y luego revendiéndolos con jugosas ganancias.

¿Cómo funciona esta especulación? El gobierno establece controles de precio para el frijol, un alimento básico. Les ofrece 396 córdobas por kilogramo a los agricultores para que produzcan frijoles. Sin embargo, los cultivadores son capaces de venderlos a 616 córdobas a los especuladores, los cuales entonces los contrabandean a las ciudades y revenden a 1,320 o más.

En 1986, el 92% de la cosecha de frijoles fue vendida privadamente, haciendo virtualmente imposible la compra de frijoles fuera del mercado negro.²⁰

También fomentando el mercado negro están los incentivos en dólares EUA dados a los agroexportadores (y, desde el año anterior, a los artesanos que producen para exportar). Diseñado para estimular la exportación y revigorizar la

"economía mixta", la política de incentivos de hecho reduce el control económico estatal y desangra al consumidor. Esta política inunda al mercado doméstico con bienes de consumo caros, importados ilegalmente y pagados en dólares, los cuales sifonean las reservas en dólares y por lo tanto limitan la reinversión necesitada vitalmente para la producción doméstica.

El mercado negro es a menudo el único sitio en donde se pueden adquirir las mercancías escasas, desde las básicas pasta dental y shampú hasta los artículos de lujo.

Así es que florece el mercado negro. Además de los artículos de consumo, el mercado negro también sostiene al comercio ilegal de materias primas para el sector manufacturero de Nicaragua.

Un factor final en el crecimiento del mercado negro es el de que mucha gente ha encontrado de que puede hacer mucho más dinero en la especulación, o la venta de artículos adulterados o importaciones de contrabando, que manteniendo un empleo con sueldo fijo. Esto es verdad aún para los profesionistas y artesanos calificados. Debido a la fuga de gente de las esferas de estos últimos, las escalas salariales para los profesionistas y técnicos fueron incrementadas desproporcionadamente en 1986. Esta subida de sueldos mató efectivamente la política previa de reducir la diferencia salarial entre los trabajadores mejor y peor pagados.



Militiaman harvests coffee in an example of revolutionary will vs. U.S. economic pressure. Un miliciano cosecha café, un ejemplo de la voluntad revolucionaria vs. la presión económica de los EUA.

De manera global, ha habido una reducción en el número de trabajadores urbanos asalariados, ya que muchos se han desplazado al sector informal para ganarse la vida. A la misma vez, la escasez de mano de obra existe tanto en el sector estatal como en el de agroexportaciones, debido a los bajos sueldos agrícolas y a la continuada migración de las áreas rurales a Managua al buscar los trabajadores ingresos llevaderos.

El gobierno está tratando de revertir esta tendencia al distribuir tierras a los campesinos. Anunció en 1986 que todos los fondos para los servicios sociales, educación y salud serían asignados a las áreas rurales, especialmente las regiones golpeadas más duramente por los contras.

Los serios problemas de Nicaragua con la productividad y disponibilidad de mano de obra están directamente relacionados con la carencia de incentivos laborales adecuados y lo atractivo del lucrativo mercado negro. **El cuarenta y cinco**

por ciento de la población económicamente activa en Managua está involucrada en el mercado negro, y aún suplementan sus empleos asalariados con ingresos del mercado negro.

Desde 1980, los dirigentes sandinistas reconocieron que el comercio informal era el sector económico de más rápido crecimiento. Pero, a pesar de las variadas medidas para meter al mercado negro bajo control, éste ha alcanzado proporciones de crisis.

Por ejemplo, fueron pasadas leyes en 1986 que forzaban a los comerciantes a usar cheques de banco en córdobas en todas las transacciones comerciales substanciales. Pero los economistas nicaragüenses estiman que el gobierno sólo controla ahora el 25% de los dólares circulantes en el mercado negro.

El FSLN ha anunciado recientemente planes para movilizar el apoyo para la supresión del mercado negro a través de equipos de inspección vecinales. Pero tales esfuerzos pueden lograr poco mientras las políticas del gobierno empujen a la gente al mercado negro para sobrevivir.

Las dinámicas del mercado negro y su enormidad revelan desoladoramente que en la economía nicaragüense, las relaciones y leyes económicas capitalistas tiene la sartén por el mango. El Estado, quedando muy corto de ser capaz de controlar la economía (aún como lo hacen en China y la Unión Soviética), está reducido a una mediación cada vez más ineficiente de las poderosas fuerzas del mercado. Esta es la inexorable suerte de una economía aislada, rodeada e impactada por el sistema capitalista mundial.

Resumen del Frente Económico

Las empresas propiedad del Estado forman el 37% del producto doméstico bruto (un aumento comparado con el 11 — 15% del sector estatal en los dos años anteriores a la insurrección).

Pongamos esta transformación en perspectiva.

Nicaragua, aunque aumentó significativamente su sector nacionalizado, todavía tiene un porcentaje menor de propiedad pública que el que tuvo Chile bajo Allende, Argentina bajo Perón, o México y Brasil hoy en día. La reforma agraria en Nicaragua, aunque impresionante, es aún similar a aquellas de los países capitalistas latinoamericanos, y es compatible con el desarrollo capitalista.

Aún más, el dominio de la gran burguesía en Nicaragua es particularmente evidente en aquellas áreas precisamente que están en el corazón productivo de la economía — agroexportaciones y el sector industrial.

Más significativo es el hecho de que **no haya habido crecimiento substancial en el sector público** desde la primera oleada de nacionalizaciones en 1980. De hecho

ha ocurrido una ligera erosión del sector agrícola estatal en favor de los pequeños y medianos agricultores.

La hegemonía del mercado capitalista, la enorme dificultad del gobierno en ejercitar aunque sea un control limitado de la economía, su rechazo a monopolizar el comercio exterior, y el crecimiento desaforado del mercado negro son resultados directos de la negación gubernamental de echar las bases políticas y económicas para la expropiación de la burguesía básicamente hostil.

Lo que es más, a pesar de la miríada de programas del gobierno, la producción como un todo no ha alcanzado los niveles preinsurreccionales. El PDB cayó de hecho 4.8% en 1985.²¹

Las estadísticas atestiguan que el "conciliacionismo" es una política económica lamentable, así como políticamente traicionera. Pero, al encarar la resistencia continuada del grueso de la bur

a la página 15 del suplemento

one. Yet, in the face of continued resistance from the bulk of the bourgeoisie, the FSLN-led government still shows no signs of taking steps to substantively alter the balance of economic power.

Altering that balance of power would have been difficult in any case, given Nicaragua's historic underdevelopment and the ravages of the civil war that

ousted Somoza. U.S. economic pressure and the infernal contra war meanwhile have made the task a thousand times more difficult. Yet it is just this imperialist onslaught, emboldened by concessions, that proves the need for the Sandinistas to reverse their economic course and move to dispossess the capitalists.

guesía, el gobierno encabezado por el FSLN no muestra todavía señales de tomar acciones para alterar substancialmente el balance del poder económico.

El alterar ese equilibrio de poder hubiera sido difícil de cualquier manera, dado el subdesarrollo histórico de Nicaragua y los estragos de la guerra civil que derribó a Somoza. La presión económica

estadounidense y la infernal guerra de la contra, mientras tanto, han hecho la tarea mil veces más difícil. Sin embargo este ataque violento imperialista, envaletonado por las concesiones, el que *prueba* la necesidad por parte de los sandinistas para revertir su derrotero económico y avanzar el desposeimiento de los capitalistas.

Notes

1. Leon Trotsky, "Not a workers' and not a bourgeois state?" in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, NY: Pathfinder Press, 1970, p.61.
2. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*, as quoted by V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, NY: International Publishers, 1974, p.33.
3. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, p.40-41.
4. *Ibid.*, p.73.
5. *Ibid.*, p.39.
6. Tom Barry and Deb Preusch, *Central American Fact Book*, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.291.
7. Forrest D. Colbum, *Post-Revolutionary Nicaragua: State, Class and the Dilemma of Agrarian Policy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986, p.121.
8. Henri Weber, *Nicaragua: The Sandinista Revolution*, London: Verso, 1981, p.86.
9. Adapted from Richard L. Harris, "The Economic Transformation and Industrial Development of Nicaragua," in *A Revolution Under Siege*, eds. Richard L. Harris and Carlos M. Vilas, Avon, England: Zed Books Ltd., 1986, p. 40-43. The figures in Table I, summarized from data produced by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agrarian Reform (MIDINRA) for 1982, are presented because they represent a summary of the most detailed set of data currently available to us.
10. There is no indication that there has been any substantive change in the relative weight of each sector, a split of 40% of Gross Domestic Product in the hands of the state versus 60% produced privately is repeatedly cited by both Nicaraguan and U.S. experts from 1982 to the present. The sole exception is the sphere of land ownership, in which the public sector has shown signs of erosion rather than growth.
11. Sources for Table II: Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (MIDINRA) as quoted in Joseph Collins, et al., *Nicaragua: What Difference Could A Revolution Make?*, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.271, and Nicaraguan General Department of Agrarian Reform (DGRA) as quoted in David Kaimowitz, "Nicaragua's Agrarian Reform: Six Months Later," in *Nicaragua: Unfinished Revolution*, eds. Peter Rosset and John Vandermeer, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.391.
12. In peasant production cooperatives, a group of peasants owns the land collectively. Participation in ownership is often limited, with additional people paid wages to work the land. In credit and service associations, the peasants own the land privately but receive preferential credit rates from the government and collectively utilize machinery and other production tools.
13. Doug Huss, "Managua Cracks Down on the Black Market," *Guardian*, Feb. 25, 1987, p.13.
14. Reinvestment rate.
15. John Weeks, "The Industrial Sector," in *Nicaragua: The First Five Years*, 3d. ed., Thomas W. Walker, NY: Praeger, 1985, p.290.
16. *Ibid.*, p.290-291.
17. Huss, p.13.
18. *Central American Report*, vol. XIII, no. 33, Aug. 29, 1986, p.259.
19. Huss, p.13.
20. *Ibid.*, p.13.
21. "Analysis," *Envío*, vol. 5, no. 63, Managua, Nicaragua: Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Sept., 1986, p.18.

Notas

1. Leon Trotsky, "Not a workers' and not a bourgeois state?" En *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, NY: Pathfinder Press, 1970, p.61.
2. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* citado por V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, NY: International Publishers, 1974, p.33.
3. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, p.40-41.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
5. *Ibid.*, p.39.
6. Tom Barry y Deb Preusch, *Central American Fact Book*, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.291.
7. Forrest D. Colbum, *Post-Revolutionary Nicaragua: State, Class and the Dilemma of Agrarian Policy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986, p.121.
8. Henri Weber, *Nicaragua: The Sandinista Revolution*, Londres: Verso, 1981, p.86.
9. Adaptado de Richard L. Harris, "The Economic Transformation and Industrial Development of Nicaragua" en *A Revolution Under Siege*, eds. Richard L. Harris y Carlos M. Vilas, Avon, Inglaterra: Zed Books Ltd., 1986, p. 40 - 43. Los datos de la tabla I, resumidos de los producidos por el Ministerio Nicaragüense de Desarrollo Agropecuario y Reforma Agraria (MIDINRA) para 1982, son presentados ya que representan un resumen del grupo de datos más detallados asequible para nosotros en la actualidad.
10. No hay indicación de que haya habido algún cambio substancial en el peso relativo de cada sector, una distribución del 40% del Producto Doméstico Bruto en manos del Estado vs. el 60% producido privadamente ha sido citado repetidamente tanto por expertos nicaragüenses como estadounidenses a partir de 1982 a la fecha. La única excepción es la esfera de la propiedad de la tierra, en la cual el sector público ha mostrado señales de erosión más que de crecimiento.
11. Las fuentes para la tabla II: Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario y Reforma Agraria (MIDINRA) citado en Joseph Collins, et al., *Nicaragua: What Difference Could A Revolution Make?*, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.271, y el Instituto Nicaragüense de Reforma Agraria, citado por David Kaimowitz, "Nicaragua's Agrarian Reform: Six Months Later," en *Nicaragua: Unfinished Revolution*, eds. Peter Rosset y John Vandermeer, NY: Grove Press, Inc., 1986, p.391.
12. En las cooperativas campesinas de producción, un grupo de campesinos posee la tierra colectivamente. La participación en la propiedad es a menudo limitada, con gente adicional asalariada para trabajar la tierra. En las asociaciones de crédito y servicio, los campesinos poseen la tierra en forma privada pero reciben tasas crediticias preferenciales del gobierno y utilizan maquinaria y otras herramientas de producción colectivamente.
13. Doug Huss, "Managua Cracks Down on the Black Market," *Guardian*, 25 feb., 1987, p.13.
14. Índice de reinversión.
15. John Weeks, "The Industrial Sector," en *Nicaragua: The First Five Years*, 3ed., Thomas W. Walker, NY: Praeger, 1985, p.290.
16. *Ibid.*, p.290 - 291.
17. Huss, p.13.
18. *Central American Report*, vol. XIII, 33, 29 ago., 1986, p.259.
19. Huss, p.13.9
20. *Ibid.*, p.13.
21. "Analysis", *Envío*, vol. 5, no. 63, Managua, Nicaragua: Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, sept., 1986, p.18.

Next (Last) Installment

The next, and final, installment of "On the Nature of the Nicaraguan State" will include an in-depth analysis of Nicaragua's state apparatus under the Sandinistas, examination of the program and goals of the FSLN government, and the authors' conclusions on the character of the state that formed out of the 1979 insurrection.

Also included are summaries and critiques of the positions on Nicaragua taken by various groups in the international Trotskyist movement in the '80s.

The installment concludes with an afterward written since the document was published, which summarizes the lessons of a decade of FSLN rule, especially in light of the February 1990 electoral defeat, and outlines what must be done now to revive the revolution and carry it forward.

Many Thanks

The authors and the *Freedom Socialist* staff extend very special thanks to Fernando López-Dellamary for his excellent, speedy, and gracious translation of this document into Spanish. Thanks also to Gabriela Tello, and to López-Dellamary again, for their eagle-eyed proofreading and for their general kind assistance in this supplement's production. We cannot imagine having done it without their help.

Siguiente (Ultimo) Fasciculo

El siguiente y último fascículo de "Sobre la Naturaleza del Estado Nicaragüense" incluirá un profundo análisis del aparato estatal de Nicaragua bajo los sandinistas, un examen del programa y metas del gobierno del FSLN, y las conclusiones de los autores sobre el carácter del Estado que se formó a partir de la insurrección de 1979.

Son incluidos también resúmenes y críticas de las posiciones sobre Nicaragua tomadas por varios grupos del movimiento trotskyista internacional en los 80's.

El fascículo concluye con una posdata escrita después de la publicación original del documento, la cual resume las lecciones de un decenio de régimen del FSLN, particularmente a la luz de la derrota electoral de febrero de 1990, y delinea lo que se tiene que hacer ahora para revivir a la revolución y llevarla hacia adelante.

Agradecimientos

Los autores y el personal del *Freedom Socialist* extienden sus especiales agradecimientos a Fernando López-Dellamary por su amable, excelente y rápida traducción de este documento al español. Agradecemos también a Gabriela Tello y a López-Dellamary otra vez, por su corrección de pruebas con "ojo de águila", y por su afable asistencia en general en la producción de este suplemento. No podemos imaginarnos el haberlo hecho sin su ayuda.

About the Authors

Dr. Susan Williams spent three weeks in Nicaragua with co-author Stephen Durham in April 1989 talking with Nicaragua's people and assessing the conclusions arrived at in the writing of this document.

An Assistant Professor of Medicine of New York Medical College, Dr. Williams is the Chief of Gastroenterology at New York City's Metropolitan Hospital, which serves the predominantly Puerto Rican and Black population of East Harlem. Since her return from Nicaragua, she has lectured on "Infant Mortality in the Third World," analyzing the social and economic causes behind the rising infant death toll worldwide.

Dr. Williams has been involved in the care of people with AIDS and in analyzing the impact of the AIDS crisis on Blacks, Latinos, gays, and women. She and Durham also collaborated to produce the document "AIDS Hysteria: A Marxist Analysis."

An incisive analyst of feminist issues and the women's movement, Dr. Williams has written and spoken particularly extensively on reproductive rights.

Stephen Durham is a Marxist scholar and theoretician whose visit to Nicaragua with Dr. Williams was the culmination of more than two decades of specialized study of South and Central America.

He received a degree in Latin American History, graduating from the University of California at Berkeley. He has traveled widely in Latin America and lived for a year in Brazil. Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, he has taught English as a second language. He writes frequently on Latin American affairs for the *Freedom Socialist*.

An ardent unionist, Durham has helped lead significant labor struggles in the restaurant industry in Los Angeles and New York City. He is a member of the Hotel Employees/Restaurant Employees Union Local 6 in Manhattan.

Durham is also a veteran activist in the movement for lesbian and gay liberation.



Stephen Durham and Dr. Susan Williams

Sobre los Autores

La Dra. Susan Williams pasó tres semanas en Nicaragua con el coautor Stephen Durham en abril de 1989 conversando con la gente de Nicaragua y evaluando las conclusiones a las que habían llegado al escribir este documento.

Profesora de medicina en el New York Medical College, la Dra. Williams es la jefa de gastroenterología en el Hospital Metropolitano de la Ciudad de Nueva York, el cual sirve predominantemente a la población puertorriqueña y negra de East Harlem. Desde su regreso de Nicaragua, ella ha dado conferencias sobre "La Mortalidad Infantil en el Tercer Mundo", analizando las causas económicas y sociales tras la cuota de muertes infantiles a lo largo y ancho del mundo.

La Dra. Williams ha estado involucrada en el cuidado de pacientes con SIDA y en el análisis del impacto de la crisis del SIDA en los negros, latinos, homosexuales y mujeres. Ella y Durham han colaborado también en la producción del documento "La Histeria del SIDA, Un Análisis Marxista".

Una analista incisiva de la cuestión feminista y del movimiento de la mujer, la Dra. Williams ha escrito y hablado extensamente sobre los derechos reproductivos.

Stephen Durham es un erudito marxista y un teórico cuya visita a Nicaragua con la Dra. Williams fue la culminación de más de dos decenios de estudios especializados sobre Sur y Centroamérica.

El obtuvo un grado en historia latinoamericana, habiéndose graduado de la Universidad de California en Berkeley. Ha viajado ampliamente por Latinoamérica y residió un año en Brasil. Habla el español y portugués con fluidez, y ha enseñado inglés como segundo idioma. Escribe frecuentemente sobre asuntos latinoamericanos en el *Freedom Socialist*.

Durham, un sindicalista ardiente, ha ayudado a dirigir luchas significativas en la industria restaurantera en Los Angeles y la Ciudad de Nueva York. Es miembro del Local 6 del sindicato de empleados de hoteles y restaurantes, en Manhattan.

Durham es también un veterano activista en el movimiento de liberación de lesbianas y gays.

t's 1991 and the Freeway Hall Case Defense Committee is preparing for trial!

The Freedom Socialist Party and nine individual defendants have waited seven years for their day in court with antagonist Richard Snedigar over his original fraud charges against them. In 1984, ex-FSP member Snedigar sued to get back a donation made to a party eviction fund in 1979. Lacking a case on the merits, Snedigar then launched a fishing expedition for meeting minutes and other internal records.

With the help of the late Leonard Boudin, eminent constitutional attorney, the defendants last year won new protections at the Washington State Supreme Court for the First Amendment privacy rights of organizations.

That decision attracted widespread press attention (see sampling below) and is being used by lawyers all over the U.S. In Detroit, for example, it helped strikers in Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1303 resist a Greyhound information dragnet in a RICO suit designed to bust the union.

Now the Freeway Hall Case Nine are eager to expose Snedigar's accusation of financial malfeasance for what it is—an attack on

the right to organize and a wrecking operation founded on redbaiting.

Their cause continues to attract remarkable new supporters. Among them are *Linus Pauling*, pathbreaking chemist, peace activist, and Nobel Prize winner in both fields, and *Harry Hay*, former Communist Party member, defiant HUAC witness, and founder of the Mattachine Society, a pioneer gay rights organization.

With trial on the horizon, the case needs your support too. *You can help by asking for endorsements from organizations and, because trial could easily cost \$20,000, by sending a generous donation to the Freeway Hall Case Defense Fund, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA, 98118. Thank you!* □

Freeway Hall Case captures the public eye

The Morning News Tribune Tacoma, Wash. Court overturns Freeway Hall decision

USA TODAY FROM EVERY STATE

WASHINGTON OLYMPIA — Freedom Socialist Party may not have the return of a party eviction from the court ruled p...

The Washington Post Civil Liberties Attorney Embraced Constitution Hundreds of Administrators Pay Tribute to Leonard Boudin, Defender of Controversial Clients

The Guardian FREEDOM SOCIALIST PARTY WINS PRIVACY RULING

In what was hailed by activist victory for privacy rights, the late Supreme Court Feb. 27, 1990, in *Freedom Socialist Party v. Snedigar*, the court ruled in favor of the party to submit its minutes for review.

The Seattle Times Milestone decision built on NAACP victories

HISPANIC NEWS Portland, Oregon Court Ruling Upholds Rights of Freedom Socialist Party

Gay Community News Boston, Massachusetts Keeping our privacy

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Court ruling supports rights of Freedom Socialist Party

By Jack Hopkins P-I Reporter

The Freedom Socialist Party's constitutional rights might be violated if it had to turn over minutes of its meetings to a former member suing for return of money he gave the group, the State Supreme Court ruled yesterday.

The ruling was a major victory for the Seattle-based political organization. The high court overturned a lower court ruling that the party must disclose its minutes to a former member who had sued for return of money he gave the group.

ling the disclosure order since 1985, contending it violates their First Amendment rights of association and would chill freedom of speech.

Yesterday's Supreme Court ruling left open the possibility the organization's minutes might be disclosed later. But the high court said that can't happen until there is a showing by the former member that he really needs the information being sought and has no other way to get it.

Snedigar contributed the money after the party received an eviction notice from Freeway Hall in the University District in 1978. He claimed, after leaving the party, that his former associates unfairly persuaded him to make the contribution by saying there was an emergency need for a headquarters. The party's new headquarters in the University District was built in 1979.

expressed confidentially are subject to disclosure. The First Amendment battle between Snedigar and the party was filed by former member Richard Snedigar to return the money he had donated to the party for the last six years on the condition that the party would not disclose the minutes. Snedigar had committed fraud on the party, the court ruled. The court ordered the FSP to return the money to Snedigar.

By Sandy Nelson

Though the government is now in the business of collecting urine samples and peeping through bedroom keyholes to monitor sex and drug behavior, counter-attacks who value privacy can breathe a little easier because of a recent Washington State Supreme Court decision upholding the right of organizations to keep meeting minutes confidential. In what is known as the Freeway Hall Case, the court on February 22 unanimously overturned a lower court's 1987 ruling against the Freedom Socialist Party for its unbending refusal to disclose minutes. Snedigar hadn't sufficiently explained why the party should be forced to divulge confidentially protected information. He had donated a headquarters, in-

ment... His central role in the fight against fascist in the Pacific Northwest. Bakan a target of neo-Nazi violence, harassment and retaliation. Last July, Bakan and other defendants who are case defendants hit list compiled by the homophobic Populists. They were shot with the party on the night of the party's eviction. Snedigar had committed fraud on the party, the court ruled. The court ordered the FSP to return the money to Snedigar.

...queer and angry

from page 20

idly implemented, consensus threatens to paralyze the militant potential of many new chapters.

Consensus-as-principle is an artificial method of avoiding the debate and decision-making that lead to meaningful action. Almost all issues produce disagreement in a movement, usually between radicals and "respectables." How can any organization act cohe-

sively and intelligently except by clarifying differences through democratic debate and then voting?

Consensus-fetishists, junking this process, keep issues cloudy.

"Consensus" is a back-door way to incapacitate movement radicals, often through rants against "leaders." Yet without leadership—programmatic and organizational initiative—nothing can be accomplished. Consensus-mongers exercise leadership, in initiating the procedures that lead to meetings becoming a lifestyle instead of a means to decide on and carry out political aims.

Frustration with consensus paralysis has produced mixed results in Queer Nation. Some chapters have become loose federations of subcommittees who stage a constant whirlwind of kiss-

ins, zaps, and other actions with little discussion and no long-term goals—a sure recipe for burnout. Some activists, disowned by newly respectable AIDS funding agencies they helped to start and treated like stepchildren in liberal coalitions, retreat into gay chauvinism.

But others, fortunately, have adopted democratic voting structures and many see Queer Nation as a means to make gay liberation a more visible part of the broader fight for radical change. The Philadelphia chapter, for example, changed its name to Queer Action in a conscious rejection of gay nationalism.

Ties that bind. The importance of democratic process is that it makes possible the hashing out of a program, the basis of real unity and effective action.

The next step to move Queer Nation forward is adoption of a program that clearly identifies and seeks to uproot the systemic source of the problems. The next step is an openly anti-capitalist plan of attack.

And it will take *leaders* to propose and help implement this program.

Queer Nation has taken an epithet, "queer," and turned it into an expression of pride. The same needs to be done with the concept of leadership. Leadership is necessary and inevitable, whether recognized or not—and with a radical program and democracy it will be bold, effective, and accountable.

Among the irreverent youth of Queer Nation are a refreshing generation of potential new lesbian/gay leaders. We need 'em. □

Editorials

U.S. economy: War in Iraq means ruin

Why not call it an apocalypse? That's as good a word as any to describe what's about to land on the U.S. economy.

All that debt racked up by Reagan and Crew has slammed home. It's the morning after, hangover time. The Headache from Hell is here.

Thank you, Saddam Hussein, for the wake-up call.

We're in recession, one that was building, the experts say, before Iraq took Kuwait, in the dear dead days when Saddam was still petro-democracy's friend.

All the Iraqi strongman did was drive a nail into the coffin of post-Cold War "peace and prosperity."

Down the tubes. But who really believed that crap about "peace dividends" coming our way—so long as Bush could rustle up a Mideast oil war?

The invasion came right in the nick of time for Bush: Americans were getting ready to hang son Neil for the S&L rip-offs.

Somebody's got to swing for the mess we're in. The government's running in hock at \$250 billion per year. And if war comes, it'll hit \$400 billion before you can blink.

Who will pay? Who always pays for the Pentagon's adventures? Look at what's happened to social spending these past ten years: welfare, health care, schools, roads—all kaput. And that budget "compromise" Congress and the White House patched together this fall, with its regressive taxation on everything from cigarettes to house insurance, its rip-off of Medicare... What are they going to stick us up for next? Bellybutton lint? What's left?

Remember Reagan's corporate tax cuts, the ones that were supposed to spur industrial reinvestment?

Several million layoffs and countless plant closures later, whither U.S. industry? Try Mexico, Taiwan, or junk bond heaven. White guys who once made \$25 per hour at General Motors are now bumping Black kids as burger flippers at the local McDonald's—or sleeping in cardboard crates with the rest of the downwardly mobile.

For a hell of a lot of people, it's a depression, not a recession, and it started around the time our current college sophomores wore diapers.

Amazing how '80s scribes were able to glitz over the misery, even as the homeless piled up like cordwood in doorways downtown. Economists kept saying we'd licked inflation, but there we were being nickled and dimed to death on necessities.

What does a house cost now? An eighth of a million? A Buick costs as much as a small house used to. Not that anyone buys American cars.

Inflation, deficits, depression. The poor have been sheared. America can't compete. S&Ls have swan-dived; banks are on the brink.

The war's on us. You think war in the Mideast is going to save the economy? Washington's going to borrow and borrow to pay for those bullets. Inflation will hit the stratosphere, two steps ahead of the deficit.

You know, Japan's been financing the deficit by investing in U.S. government bonds. But since Big Oil used the Mideast crisis to jack up the price of crude, Tokyo's been bailing out. Suddenly, they're cash-short too.

And if you think war spending's inflationary, wait 'til you see what oil costs do to the price of pork chops and underwear.

Some, such as financiers reaping interest from government loans, will do swell in the coming period. The rest of us? Forget it.

Economically speaking, we're up the proverbial creek, headed over the falls toward the sharp rocks below.

War is here, and the Pentagon is signing the bills in our name. All so Exxon can continue to fleece us to death at the gas pumps.

Another plant gate just swung shut. Another family is fighting for space in a doorway. General Motors, meanwhile, is basking in Mexico's sunshine, raking in bucks off the cheap labor down there. Will the automakers ever go back to Detroit? Sure, if Congress reinstitutes slavery.

You get the drift. Their profits equal our misery. War, inflation, depression, starvation—capitalism's Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

How to unhorse the apocalypse? Put the capitalists out to pasture, what else? □

Young, angry & queer

Queers Bash Back! In the wake of epidemic levels of anti-gay violence this slogan has found an unprecedented and enthusiastic response among a new generation of lesbians and gays. Chapters of Queer Nation, a militant new organization which espouses direct action and self-defense, have sprung up overnight across the U.S.

These young people are outraged at being harassed by police while neo-Nazi thugs are allowed to terrorize gay neighborhoods; angry at rightwingers who scapegoat them for social ills; and disgusted with a system which spends billions on war while the public health system collapses.

The emergence of Queer Nation signals a healthy new boldness and a deepening disaffection with reformist gay organizations, who are permanent bottoms in an S&M relationship with the Democratic Party. Despite Democratic control of the legislature, Congress gutted the much-touted Ryan White AIDS bill and civil rights rollbacks continue. By contrast, mass demonstrations by groups like ACT UP have had tangible results in the fight against AIDS.

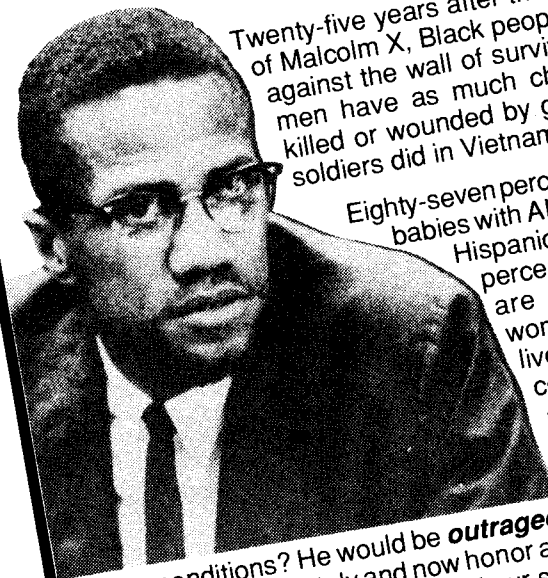
Many of the founders of Queer Nation reject capitalist twin-party politics and timid tactics. But there is little agreement on what strategies *will* work.

The consensus question. Debates over democratic process seem to be permanent agenda fixtures in Queer Nation meetings. Submerged and open differences over *program* and *leadership* come out in the form of endless discussions over consensus decision-making as an organizational principle. Where rig-

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In Tribute to Malcolm X 1925-1965

by Aaron Dixon



Twenty-five years after the assassination of Malcolm X, Black people are mashed against the wall of survival. Our young men have as much chance of being killed or wounded by gunfire as Black soldiers did in Vietnam.

Eighty-seven percent of women and babies with AIDS are Black and Hispanic. Fifty-five to sixty percent of Black families are raised by single women, most of whom live in poverty. If you could package evil, cocaine would be it.

What would brother Malcolm think about these conditions? He would be **outraged**. That is why we cling to Malcolm desperately and now honor and celebrate him more each day. He is the living spirit of our struggle.

Aaron Dixon helped found the Seattle Black Panther Party. He and his brother Elmer are writing a book on the party's history, objectives and relevance for today.

Radical Women

Art & censorship — a feminist view

Art has tremendous power to spread subversive ideas and so rebel artists today are feeling the wrath of the right wing.

Anti-obscenity crusaders have selected such diverse targets as the late gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe; Black rappers; Andres Serrano, creator of "Piss Christ"; the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival; and feminist Judy Chicago's "The Dinner Party."

Central to the rightwing censorship strategy is pseudo-feminism, an insidious weapon that, by equating explicit sexuality with sexual exploitation, is being used to repress feminist artists, Black and gay artists, and any others likely to offend the sensibilities of noted critic Jesse Helms.

Pseudo-feminism is key. It wasn't just racism that prompted Florida prosecutors to bust 2 Live Crew last year. Group leader Luther Campbell's lyrics are justly hated by feminists for their unbridled, contemptuous misogyny and homophobia. What better scapegoat for misogynist crusaders? Their game plan is not only to blur the distinction between explicitness and exploitation, but to pit feminists and gays against people of color and civil libertarians and, on the basis of divisions in the "progressive" camp, more easily go after all rebels, thinkers, and artists.

"Pro-feminist" censorship, yet! But obscenity laws, rooted in "pro-family" sexual moralism, are anti-feminist to the core. The ultra-right pontificates that society's "morbid and shameful interest in sex" is the cause of women's subjugation, when in fact sexual repression is a major aspect of women's second-class status. You can trace the moralism right back to the ancient patriarchal efforts to lock women up in the home, to ensure the husband's paternity and the passage of his property to "rightful" heirs.

What in essence has changed? "Pro-family" rightwingers, the strong

arm of Christian capitalism, are all about property—and the prerogatives of the straight white men who own and control most of it.

That's why their attacks on "obscenity" reek so strongly of homophobia, racism, and, yes, misogyny—the social pillars of property and power in the capitalist U.S.A.

Mapplethorpe. Child pornography, an issue of major concern to the women's movement, was the ostensible reason the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center director was put on trial for showing Robert Mapplethorpe's retrospective, "The Perfect Moment."

The controversy marked the first time in U.S. history a museum was tried for obscenity. It focused on the less than one percent of the photos in Mapplethorpe's exhibit which portray sado-masochistic imagery or nude children.

I saw the exhibit. The photos of the children were not pornographic. And while I think there is sexism underlying any uncritical depiction of S&M, I believe public exposure encourages discussion and therefore increased opportunities to raise feminist consciousness about S&M.

Homophobic moralism prompted the attacks on Mapplethorpe's work. The right wing was infuriated by the legitimacy gained by an accomplished gay artist whose primary subject was gay lifestyles, an implicit challenge to the nuclear family "norm."

Racism against rappers. The 2 Live Crew case is a classic example of the insidiousness of the new censorship, not only because the prosecution purported to be standing up for women, but because the case is being used as a steppingstone to censor anti-racist rappers such as Public Enemy.

Bans—including one recently reversed in Berkeley, California due to public outcry—and exorbitant insurance rates have been leveled against rap

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Voices of Color

Miss Saigon: Money calls a racist tune

One would think, as we advance into the last decade of the 20th century, that multicultural reality would dictate the right of people of color—Chinese, Blacks, Vietnamese, Latinos/Chicanos, Native Americans, any racial group to which one belongs—to portray ourselves on stage and screen.

Not so, as shown by the controversy raging since mid-1990 over the casting of *Miss Saigon*, a musical play due to hit Broadway this spring.

Miss Saigon, an update of *Madame Butterfly*, is set in Vietnam in 1975, as U.S. forces are withdrawing in defeat.

Jonathan Pryce, a white actor who plays the Eurasian male lead in the London production, is producer Cameron Mackintosh's choice to play the role in New York. The Asian American and other communities of color have loudly denounced the choice.

Actors' Equity, bowing to protest, first barred Pryce from taking the role.

Mackintosh then canceled the Broadway run, after ringing up \$25 million in advance sales, to force a reversal by Equity. The union caved in. *Miss Saigon* will come to Broadway. Pryce will play the lead.

Money talks. Asian American actors wanted the right to be auditioned for the lead, but were never given the opportunity. No one is brazen enough to say that there aren't any qualified Asian actors, but that is still the underlying racist assumption.

Sure, there aren't any "bankable" Asian American actors who can "carry" the play. It's believed no one would want to see an Asian American starring, at least no one who can afford a hundred-dollar ticket to *Miss Saigon*.

Once again, money considerations are used as a rationale for injustice. And lurking behind the rationale is, again, the idea that somehow an Asian actor can't act well enough, or isn't "charismatic" enough, to draw in the crowds.

You'd think that the recent success of the movie *Dances with Wolves*—whose Native American actors are acclaimed as essential to the picture's realism, emotional wallop, and drawing power—

would have changed some minds on this score.

Nonetheless, in the megabucks-dominated American theater, the Cameron Mackintoshes will likely continue to place "bankable" white actors in all the leading roles, and to hell with equal opportunity.

Spurious reasoning.

Asian American actors and playwrights and their allies—other actors of color and community activists—have protested the dearth of opportunity in the casting of *Miss Saigon* and achieved some results. The "yellow face" makeup worn in the London production has disappeared.

This being so, Cameron had to scramble to justify using Pryce in the role. Though Asian Americans who have read the libretto say the role calls for a Vietnamese, Mackintosh defined the character as half French—hence the European Pryce can play him with as little affront to justice as an Asian could. It's six one way, half dozen the other, right?

Sure, as soon as Eurasians in this society are no longer discriminated against—as

City can obviously fulfill only part of the need for Asian Americans to play ourselves.

Those Asian American actors with roles in *Miss Saigon* should push to open up opportunities for their brother and sister actors of color, in starring roles and character parts as well. Actors' Equity must support them. And the public should boycott the show. That means enlisting support from labor and other movements.

In this stacked system, we have to organize from within and without to make change. That's what the Black civil rights movement did in the '60s and early '70s. And while Black actors are a long way from having won equality, you can bet that Hollywood and Broadway wouldn't dare put a white actor in a Black role today. The movement would crucify any producer who tried such a stunt!

In a multicultural America that denies equality, I'm not fooled by the few faces of color appearing in magazines and on the stage, screen, TV, and billboards. Money still rules the arts and media. And the long green dictates that a disproportionate number of faces we see

No one is brazen enough to say that there aren't any qualified Asian actors, but that is still the underlying racist assumption.

people of color.

So long as Mackintosh's bogus thinking rules in mainstream theater, Asian American actors will continue to play only the kind of supporting roles—houseboys, cooks, etc.—that have traditionally been theirs. They should be grateful they're onstage at all; that is the message that the power brokers of the theater industry are sending.

For multicultural equality. Plays produced by Asian American theater companies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and New York

there are white.

When creative freedom is no longer stifled by the almighty dollar, then we'll see the flourishing of real multiculturalism: yellows, blacks, browns, reds, and whites—women and men, lesbian and gay and straight—looming large in theaters and on movie screens as we are in life. □

—NELLIE WONG

Nellie Wong is the author of two collections of poetry, *Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park* and *The Death of Long Steam Lady*.



Clara Fraser

Long Arabian Nights

I HATE IT, I hate it—I hate this war. I have never hated a war so much. It's even worse than Vietnam, than Nicaragua, which seared our vitals and consumed us with outrage and horror.

It's worse because this one is something of a shocker. We didn't really expect America's imperial decision-makers to do something so inane and self-defeating.

Yet they had to.

They have to preserve their system. They have to carve out their new world order of permanent occupation of Persian Gulf oil producers and colonialist control of the region's politics.

And who are "they"? I can imagine who advises and orders George Bush around. They are a scary assemblage of fabulously wealthy and callous white males who would blow up the planet to prevent the birth of a beautiful new world based on economic democracy and untrammelled intellectual and cultural freedom.

BUT WHY are they so bestial, so arrogant?

Well really, folks, what do you expect from the moguls of finance capital and their military and political errand boys?

The compulsive war on Iraq isn't Bush's folly. This ghostly war isn't a matter of individuals, or personal psychology, or miscalculations, or ignorance of cultural diversities, or accidents, or unpredictable quirks of fate, or sanctions versus saturation bombs.

The carnage is precisely what the U.S. government is all about. Governments reflect and express economic relations, and our economic set-up is predatory. A private-profit and profiteering economy makes for Rambo-istic militarism and an accommodating government. The state, after all, is a body of armed men.

SO DON'T blame Bush alone. He's only a spokesman and operative for his ruling class. And he's good at his job; the years as CEO of the CIA prepared him well for executive-level deceit, chicanery and unsurprisingly cynical demagoguery.

For make no mistake about it—Desert Storm is a deliberate, long-planned, and choreographed sting. Saddam Hussein and Kuwait have been manipulated and conned into computer-predictable responses to suit our scenario.

Imperialists always do it the sneaky way. Modern history reads like political detective fiction or the spy novel genre. The White House screams "Naked Aggression"—but the White House provoked it. Our preppy prexy demands "support" for our troops since they are there—but how did they get over there? By necessity. By the intrinsic, driving nature of an aggrandizing, money-making society. The Pentagon and the Bush leaguers manufacture both wars and guile like assembly lines produce refrigerators.

GIVEN THIS social anatomy, prayers for peace and clarion calls for sanity and restraint won't cut it. They may be comforting but they are irrelevant. The millions of appalled Americans will not get far enough with protests until they realize that "peace" isn't an answer because it isn't possible. War can't be reformed out of the system. Only revolution will count.

BUSH AND HIS COHORTS resort to war because of their terror of home-grown radicals and possible revolt. War has always been a continuation of domestic policy on another front, always launched by way of phony warnings about foreign dangers and supposed enemies, all calculated to confuse the working class and its allies, and divert the people from mushrooming evils on the home front.

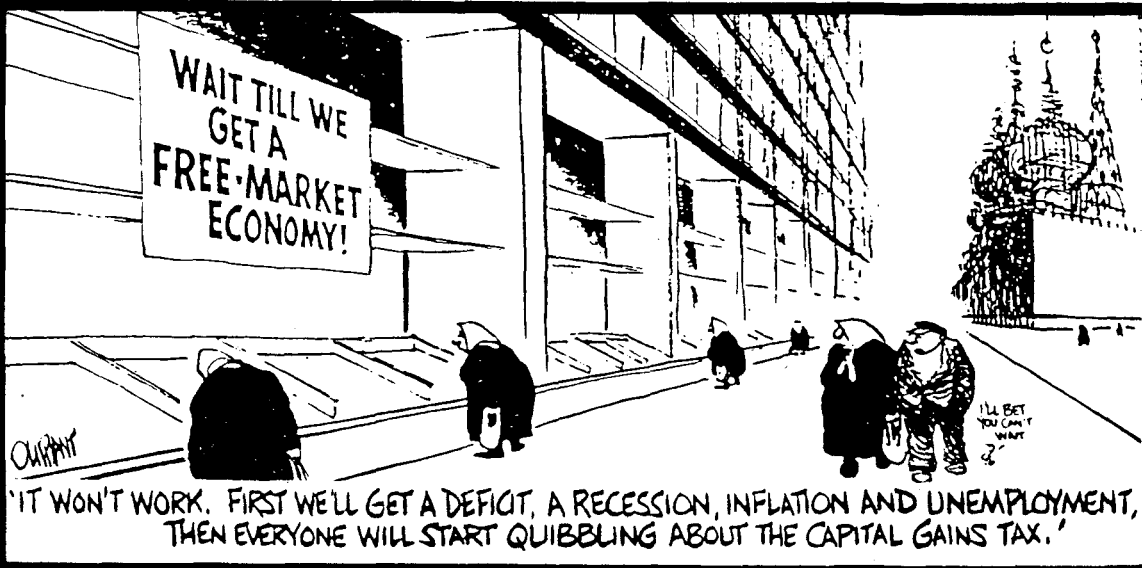
And worst of all: workers and people of color, who are disproportionately found in the armed forces for want of stateside opportunity, are cruelly forced to slaughter and maim their class brothers and sisters in other lands. Internationalism—the solidarity of workers of the world against their common overlords—gives way to nationalistic patriotism and mutual extermination.

Moreover, war doesn't only stymie international consciousness but throttles dissent and resistance in the home country. War is a marvelous tactic, a magic gimmick for enforcing conformity and timidity.

THE WAR was meant to disarm and disorient critics and potential radicals. It was meant to cancel the soaring dreams released by visions of glasnost and perestroika; it was crafted to subdue a global passion for justice. *It was unleashed not only for Persian Gulf hegemony but to shut us all up.*

But we're incorrigible. We persist in conducting our subversive business at the same old stand. In a way, we are terrorists just like Bush—but terrorists only of the *Idea*. Our socialist ideals terrorize him. And that is the source of our eventual power over his ilk.

That ilk does what it has to do. But the majority of us belong to another class, a different race, the other sex, a different sexual orientation, a fresh generation, or an opposing world view. And we'll see whose ass will be kicked this time around, when all the sands of Saudi Arabia prove unable to conceal the mangled evidence of Bush's butchery. And when Bush comes to hate our war as much as we detest his. □



...stop the carnage

from page 1

the crowd that spent the '80s telling people that congressional Democrats would somehow end the U.S. war on Nicaragua and El Salvador.

These leaders still hope to pressure Congress to stop this war as well—and this has consequences, first and foremost the shutting out of radicals from policy-making and debate and, in turn, exciting all free speech.

Democrats are *capitalists*. The Campaign doesn't want to offend them by giving radicals a platform or by plumbing the capitalist cause of this war. The Dems are *pro-Israel*, and this directly accounts for the Campaign's intransigence in co-equally condemning Iraq, which is perceived by Zionists as the main threat to Israel's existence.

The Campaign won't admit the influence. How could they explain what amounts to covert support for Israel, the U.S. Mideast proxy state? Also, the question of Israel would tend to focus scrutiny on congressional—capitalist—sway over the antiwar movement.

Campaign leaders would rather ax discussion. Redbaiting remains the weapon of choice for putting discussion on hold. Witness Paul Zisel, co-founder of the Campaign-affiliated Seattle Coalition for Peace in the Mideast, and leader of Seattle's International Jewish Peace Union, who blames "the sectarian Left...now plaguing us" for movement divisions.

That's almost funny. This writer was present at a Seattle antiwar meeting last August when Zisel stormed out because attendees refused to rubber-stamp his condemnation of Iraq.

"Popular" Stalinism. If the Campaign's inadequacies stem from their pro-Democrat, pro-Israeli politics, those of the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention are rooted in the blinkered Stalinism of the Workers World Party.

The Coalition's refusal to address Iraq's invasion is an outgrowth of the notion, Stalin's own, that any Third World state is definitively "anti-imperialist," hence beyond reproach. But open support for Iraq is *verboten*; Saddam is a dictator, after all, and were WWP to openly proclaim support, they would lose in the popularity polls. WWP lusts for popularity.

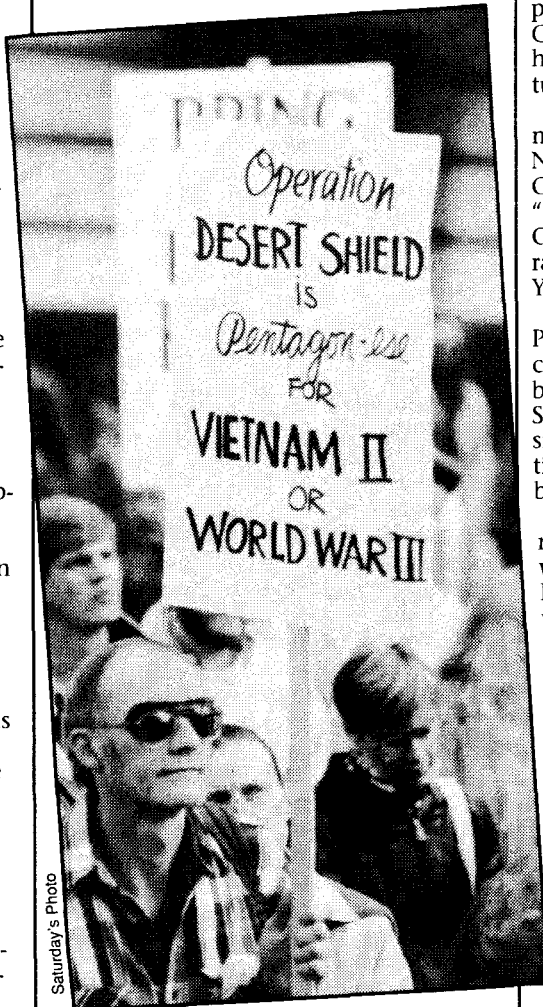
Popularity has its price in the Coalition—democracy and effectiveness. Shut-down of this particular discussion precludes examination of what caused the

invasion, preventing full understanding of imperialism's seminal role.

Why would WWP want to prevent this understanding? Because debate over issues might radicalize people—not the road WWP has chosen to win friends and influence people.

In the Bay Area Coalition WWP has stiff-armed proposals by Freedom Socialist Party and other radicals to include socialist speakers at rallies, saying they would "alienate popular forces."

WWP claims the Coalition itself is radical—"We reach out to people of color." So what? So do the Democratic Party and the tobacco industry. The point is a radical *program*,



Saturday's Photo

which the Coalition ain't got. The war is a disaster for people of color—and everyone else. But *why?* Capitalism? To say that would "alienate popular forces."

So where does that leave people of color and youth and women and others outside the "popular" mainstream, whose concerns demand radical solutions (as indeed do the mainstream's)?

Upset and rebellious, that's where. Perhaps that's why the Coalition's national steering committee hands down fiat for local groups to obey.

Revolt in the ranks. Coalition Stalinism or Campaign liberalism—both lead down the same sinkhole of exclusivity, dictatorial bureaucratism, and divisiveness.

The grass roots are disgusted with the steady diet of arrogance. They want unity and democracy.

A host of antiwar organizing efforts have sprung up outside the aegis of either the Campaign or Coalition. Protests are daily events in the Bay Area, for example, in San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, and even in suburbs such as Concord and Walnut Creek, traditionally bastions of conservatism. Black veteran and anti-Klan activist Willie Hyman reports that the Peace Center in Chico, California called a rally on January 12, hoping 150 people would come. The turnout was 1,350!

Two days earlier, NOW led a women's march to the Saudi consulate in New York City, demanding "No War for Gender Apartheid" in that country and "Equal Rights for Women Everywhere!" On January 14, anarchists led an antiwar rally in Tompkins Park, center of New York's squatters' movement.

In Seattle, "Mothers and Others for Peace" held vigils on January 11 at every community center in the city, drawing between 50 and 200 people at each. Seattle's Black community plans discussions on Blacks and the war in conjunction with the Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday celebrations.

Youth Against War (YAW), the organization of draft-age men and women who organized the Kent, Washington high school walkout, originally tried to work in the Northwest Coalition Against U.S. Intervention, but left in disgust in November. They assail the Coalition's bureaucratism, lack of concern with the issues of youth and other oppressed people, and its near-exclusive focus on getting the U.S. out.

Says YAW member Debbie Wong, "We need more than just a call to bring the troops home. We don't want to come home from Saudi Arabia just to be sent to someplace like Panama. And when we come home, we want jobs and a decent life."

She sums up the feelings of the no-longer-silenced antiwar majority.

Radicals & internationalists. Antiwar radicals aren't waiting for the liberals to fade; they are making sure their voice gets heard.

Last September in Seattle, several groups, including Vietnam Veterans Against the War (Anti-Imperialist), FSP, Radical Women (RW), and YAW put out a call for an Internationalist Brigade. The call was issued in conjunction with a picket at Fort Lewis supporting antiwar military personnel, specifically Marines resister Jeff Patterson.

FSP and RW in both New York and the Bay Area have put out similar calls. Forty leftists and community activists came to the January 12 Bay Area meeting. New York meetings have drawn Chilean feminists, Iranian leftists, and U.S. labor and abortion rights activists, immigrants, and students.

Points of unity hammered out highlight the causes and nature of the war and are widely inclusive of the concerns of the oppressed in the U.S. and Mideast. Adopted at least in part in each of the three cities, they include: *U.S. Out of the Mideast; No War for Oil Profits; Dismantle the U.S. War Machine; Stop Racism Against Arabs and Arab-Americans; End Israel's Occupation of Palestine; Stop Reprisals Against GI Resisters; Nationalize the Energy Industry Under Workers' Control.*

The points address the question of the antiwar movement itself: *For Antiwar Leadership Collaboration and Accountability; Scrap the Republicans and Democrats; For an Antiwar Movement Opposing Racism and Respecting Women, Youth, Lesbians and Gays, Immigrants, and All Antiwar Activists; For a Democratic, Global Antiwar Movement.*

FSP representative Tom Boot reports that the Bay Area contingent is currently discussing an explicitly anti-capitalist stance.

These Internationalist contingents are, says Seattle Brigade member Muffy Sunde, "a way to get a message across that the movement is light years ahead of the leaders." The Brigade, she says, has kept "groups like Youth Against War and the Stonewall Committee for Lesbian/Gay Rights, who were effectively shut out of the Northwest Coalition, working with other radicals."

The contingents, she continues, "are an example of how antiwar democracy can and should work. We have many disagreements among us, but you *can* bring diverse groups together under a common banner."

All three contingents are looking to make an impact on the January 19 and 26 marches, through leafleting the current swelling protests, discussing the issues with activists, and demanding that out-of-the-closet radicals be allowed on the speakers' podiums. They can and will make an impact; the Seattle Brigade first marched on October 20. An estimated 500 out of 1000 or so demonstrators marched under their banner.

Now that war has begun, people are angrier than ever. It's a radical situation; they want radical solutions.

Can an antiwar movement against capitalism be too far off? □

—ROBERT CRISMAN
with Tom Boot, Berkeley, and
Stephen Durham, New York City

...art and censorship

from page 20

shows on the shaky grounds that the concerts spawn violence. Yet no similar restrictions apply to white heavy metal musicians who also give concerts where violence has erupted.

Meanwhile, the group Guns 'n Roses, beloved by fascists, sells millions

of records laced with racist and homophobic epithets. Radio stations bleep the word "fucking" when they air their songs, but leave words like "faggot" and "nigger" uncut.

The onslaught against rappers who promote sexual violence is being used to whip up racism, not protect women. There's a way to deal with the 2 Live Crews—and Guns 'n Roses—of this world without jumping on the right-wing/government censorship bandwagon. When so-called artists promote violence against women, or gays, or any other group, the feminist and other

movements should oppose those artists with demonstrations, boycotts and educational critiques. We can and must organize politically to address and change the social climate that fosters the real obscenities—misogyny, racism, etc.

Artists themselves have an enormous role to play. Women rappers are speaking out against sexism, for example. As MC Lady "D" raps, "Women of hip hop need not take this bullshit."

The Lady "D"s deserve support. The best support is to organize against 2 Live Crew-style woman-hating, Guns 'n Roses racism and homophobia—and rightwing/government censors. They're all part of the same smutty package.

Juries defend free speech.

Leon Trotsky wrote, "Art, like science,

not only does not seek orders, but by its very essence cannot tolerate them." And, thankfully, government erosion of artistic freedom is not currently popular. Both the Mapplethorpe and Miami 2 Live Crew juries returned innocent verdicts. 2 Live Crew juror Beverly Resnick said, "You take away one freedom, and pretty soon they're all gone."

For these reasons, and to deflect the right wing's divisive program of equating anti-sexism and anti-sex politics, feminists should be out in front, defending artistic freedom against *any* government censorship while simultaneously organizing against those artists who dehumanize and encourage violence against women. □

—CONSTANCE SCOTT

Radical Women

An international socialist feminist organization in the front lines of the fight against racism, sexism, fascism, anti-gay bigotry and labor exploitation.

Join Us!

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Los Angeles: 1918 W. 7th St., #204,
Los Angeles, CA 90057. 213-413-1350.
San Francisco Bay Area: National Office
523-A Valencia St., San Francisco,
CA 94110. 415-864-1278.

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Rm. 907, New York, NY 10003.
212-677-7002.

OREGON
Portland: 7038 N. Fairport Pl.,
Portland, OR 97217. 503-289-7082.

WASHINGTON
Port Angeles: 512 E. 7th, Port Angeles,
WA 98362. 206-452-7534.
Seattle: New Freeway Hall, 5018
Rainier Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98118.
206-722-6057.

Spokane: W. 3005 Boone, Spokane, WA
99201. 509-327-9196.
Tacoma: P.O. Box 5847, Tacoma, WA
98405. 206-383-4142.

AUSTRALIA
Melbourne: P.O. Box 266, West
Brunswick, VIC 3055. 03-386-5065.

...exiled from newsroom

from page 3

Northwest Newspaper Guild Local 82, filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board. The basis of their complaint is that MNT unilaterally imposed an ethics code still on the bargaining table and that the code's barring of political involvement infringes on journalists' First Amendment rights.

Journalists, unionists, and activists have formed the Sandy Nelson Defense Committee, which includes campaigners from Proposition One, various state representatives, and members of the

Tacoma Human Rights Commission, to name a few. The committee is pushing Tribune publishers to give Nelson her reporting job back and lobbying the NLRB to take up the case.

If MNT gets away with this reassignment, it will set a precedent for management's right to silence radicals and other "undesirables."

To help stop this, you can write Norm Bell and demand Nelson's reinstatement: *Morning News Tribune*, P.O. Box 11000, Tacoma, WA, 98411. Please send a copy to Art Joyner, Newspaper Guild, 3049 S. 36th Street, Tacoma, WA 98409. If you can gather signatures on postcards supporting Nelson, call her defense committee at 206-572-6643. □

—MATT NAGLE

Merle Woo raps UC Berkeley: Stop stalling on settlement!

There's no letup in the ongoing fight to win lecturer Merle Woo a just settlement in her suit against the University of California at Berkeley (UC).

The battle commenced in 1986, after Woo was fired from UC's Graduate School of Education, where she'd been reinstated after winning a race, sex and political ideology discrimination suit against UC in 1984. Woo brought the original suit after being fired from Asian American Studies in 1982. She was fired then for the same reason UC doesn't want to settle fairly with her now: UC administration doesn't want a socialist lesbian on campus who speaks up for free speech and the workplace rights of students and staff.

After the '86 firing, Woo's union, the University Council-American Federation of Teachers, filed a grievance that was finally decided via arbitration in February 1989. Arbitrator Leo Kanowitz found that the university had acted in an "arbitrary, capricious and unreasonable" manner in refusing to consider Woo for reappointment to the graduate school. Kanowitz directed UC to reinstate Woo "to her position as a lecturer on the Berkeley campus with full back pay, benefits, seniority, and other privileges of employment."

UC has refused to adhere to the directive. The university did offer Woo positions in Rhetoric or Asian American Studies, but for one year only, and with clear indication that she would *not* pass a review for re-employment.

According to Merle Woo Defense Committee (MWDC) member Tom



Doreen McGrath/FS

Boot, "It is obvious that UC is unwilling to reinstate Merle under reasonable conditions. She's only asking to be treated like any other lecturer, which means having the right to be considered for reappointment." Added Woo, "With the new Ethnic Studies requirement and the administration's public statements about their commitment to faculty diversity, it's hard to believe that UC is unable to find a fair placement for me. What is apparent is that if I accept any of their offers, UC will force me into litigation to retain my job every year until I retire."

Given that and the fact that she accomplished what she set out to do

when her case began—thwart campus McCarthyism—Woo has decided "to pursue a monetary settlement with the university as compensation for my 1989 victory." She also wishes to continue teaching in her present position in the Women's Studies program at San Francisco State.

The Winner! Woo indeed achieved her objectives in her fight.

Her right to teach has twice been affirmed in court. And in the process, she has inspired a generation of campus activists in their own struggles for student democracy and multicultural equality. "The main reason we have continued on," says Woo, "is to show the university it can't get away with trying to squelch free speech in the classroom and in the workplace. Throughout the nine years, UC has been unable to consolidate campus McCarthyism in Berkeley, as the upsurge of activism at the university shows."

Hotbed. Last year, the Berkeley campus indeed bubbled with activism.

Growing concerns about the equitableness of UC's tenure review process prompted a special hearing by the California State legislature. Invited to testify were faculty members Marcy Li Wang, Jenny Harrison, and Joel Garcia, who claimed that procedural violations in their tenure cases added up to covert race discrimination.

The United Front Coalition organized a two-day student strike demanding the immediate tenure of two faculty members of color who had been unjustly denied it; establishment of a les-

bian, gay and bisexual studies center; the repatriation of bones of Native Americans held on campus; and implementation of proposals by the AFSCME campus union to end biased treatment of women and people of color on staff.

And student outcry against the anti-gay policies of ROTC pressured the UC chancellor to take a stand against the armed forces' discriminatory attitudes and practices.

"The administration has failed to erode our rights," says Woo. "The freedoms of expression and assembly are alive and well at UC Berkeley."

Keeping the pressure on. The MWDC has taken up a letter-writing campaign urging Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien to authorize a fair settlement with Woo. Public pressure is working. Attorney Christine Helwick, UC's negotiator, complained to Woo's attorney, Ellen Lake, "I'm tired of all these letters. What will it take to settle this case?" Since then, UC has upped its initial settlement offer.

The defense committee asks supporters to keep up the heat. Letters can be sent to Chancellor Tien, 200 California Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720. Urge Tien to settle with Woo fairly and generously and let him know that people everywhere are watching this case closely.

Woo, meanwhile, is looking forward to getting back to fulltime teaching and to continuing her work with student activists who have the savvy, maturity, and will to make major changes in the educational system. □

—NANCY REIKO KATO

...purge of socialists

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ment. Delegates from other unions spoke out on their behalf at KCLC meetings and decried McCarthyite witchhunts within the ranks of labor. Over 35 KCLC delegates signed a petition calling for their reinstatement.

The E-Board's attack created a pro-democracy movement to regain membership control over the local. An educational organizing campaign was conducted by members of the Committee to Reinstatement Karrie and Kim.

In petitions circulated at the library and in a climactic 26-19 vote at the September 14 union meeting, the majority of Local 2083-C members demanded Davison's and Peterson's reinstatement as KCLC delegates.

The E-Board refused. They invited the union lawyer to render a "legal opinion" that 2083-C members did not have the right to order the reinstatement, that is, to run their own union!

2083-C members protested strongly. In addition, 65 members and officers of AFSCME state employee unions signed a letter demanding implementation of the reinstatement vote.

Dirty tricks. In a move to sidestep the democracy issue, the E-Board pushed through a resolution at a November union meeting calling for election of new KCLC delegates in December. They nominated themselves and their friends as candidates. The request to reinstate Davison and Peterson per the September vote was shunted aside.

Davison and Peterson ran for election on a slate with two other like-minded rank-and-filers. Their platform opposed layoffs, speedups, and contract concessions; demanded that the E-Board be accountable to the membership; defended affirmative action, civil liberties, abortion rights, and democ-

racy within KCLC; and called for formation of a labor party independent of the Republicans and Democrats.

They would have won the election were it not for the E-Board's redbaiting, intimidation, and sleazy maneuvers. The election was rigged.

For one thing, the E-Board had neglected to sign up new union members. (The library is a union shop, but membership is not automatic.) Many library workers who thought they were members were not. Over two dozen signers of the petition to reinstate Davison and Peterson weren't members—which the E-Board undoubtedly knew when they introduced the election resolution. When these people tried to get ballots, they were told they couldn't vote without paying enormous back dues!

Also, after the AFSCME District Council mailed out only the E-Board's election literature, Davison and Peterson's supporters had to threaten a sit-down at the council office to get theirs sent out. The second mailing happened days after many members had already returned their mail-in ballots.

The fight has just begun.

Dirty tricks won the day for the E-Board. But the legacy of the battle is a strong union rank-and-file presence—though efforts to wreck this fledgling

Remembering Rosie Jiménez

Rosaura "Rosie" Jiménez died in Texas on October 3, 1977, of a botched illegal abortion. She was the first woman to die because of the Hyde Amendment, which outlawed Medicaid funds for abortions.

It's no accident Rosie, a poor Chicana, was the first victim. Abortions were legal—but only for those who could pay.

Texas authorities tried to cover up, saying she was killed in Mexico. They didn't want a spotlight to shine on racist, sexist U.S. injustice, which dooms women like Rosie to die by the thousands in back-alley butcheries.

As feminists continue the long fight for everyone's full reproductive rights—against forced sterilization and for free abortion on demand—we will remember Rosie. We'll see to it she didn't die in vain.



development continue.

The latest is an anonymous leaflet distributed to library employees in their work mailboxes. While it looks like a joke, with jumbled layout and absurd copy, its message is serious.

It accuses "Radical Women's members in the Seattle Library Local" of "tearing apart the union and making a GIANT ISSUE OUT OF NOTHING." It tries to incite disgust for Davison and Peterson's upfront Trotskyist politics and membership in Radical Women.

This type of redbaiting smear is designed to terrorize those it does not persuade. It sends the message to potential supporters of Davison and Peterson that they can expect to be similarly harassed and slandered.

It won't work. Too much is on the line in today's battles with management for workers to be more than tem-

porarily derailed from demanding honest, bold union leadership.

Next steps for reformers and radicals at the library: force the union leaders to sign all library workers into the union and drop the back-dues claims, and build toward new E-Board elections this summer. Look for the E-Board to help prepare its own defeat by failing to fight against library management's current reorganization/speedup drive.

The past campaign was simply step one in the valiant struggle of Seattle library workers to break the stranglehold of old-boy unionism—a struggle that will be shared by and transform every union in the country sometime during the exciting first few years of the '90s. □

—FRED HYDE

Two endangered species of the Pacific Northwest are front-page news these days—the northern spotted owl and the logger. Portrayed as irreconcilable antagonists, they are in fact ecological kin, dependent on the same environment. Their existence is threatened by the same voracious predator—the timber industry.

The ancient forests which once covered the greater part of the U.S. have sustained both the logger and the owl. Now these forests are nearly gone, with most of the remaining old-growth stands concentrated in an ever-thinner and spottier strip running along the western Cascades through Washington, Oregon, and northern California.

The fates of owl and logger are indissolubly bound up with their habitat—which is disappearing at the rate of nearly 70,000 acres every year.

This isn't the case for the corporations whose chainsaws are leveling the forests. The whole planet is their "habitat," and the redwood or the Douglas fir just another commodity.

When corporate raider Harold Simmons is through clearcutting the old growth he acquired in 1984 near Butte Falls, Oregon, for example, he will still have another means of survival: a two-billion-dollar empire in sugar, petroleum, chemicals, and fast-food restaurants.

The immediate fact is that protecting the owl *will* mean the loss of between 25,000 and 50,000 timber jobs in the next decade. But the bigger truth is that the timber companies' feeding frenzy has *already* brought about a sharp, continuing decline in the number of industry jobs—as well as the near-annihilation of an irreplaceable resource, the ancient forest, which is a vital part of the planet's overall life-support system.

Owl, forest, earth.

The spotted owl is an unlikely candidate to have gained such notoriety, attracted so many champions, and earned so many enemies.

Mostly nocturnal, the owls stand two feet tall or less and weigh little more than a pound. They claim territory in pairs, staying in the same home areas for as long as they can.

After years of foot-dragging and resistance, the Fish and Wildlife Service in June 1990 listed the spotted owl as a threatened species. This means that the government is required by the Endangered Species Act to guard the owl's survival—and for its survival it needs extensive quantities of very old forest. It thrives in the unmanaged forest, with its variety of tree species and types of wildlife, many standing dead trees, and, on the forest floor, messy natural litter.

The owl is an "indicator species" for the ancient forest ecosystem. It's the canary in the mine. The health or precariousness of the forest and its other inhabitants mirrors the owl's status.

The old-growth forest provides a home for thousands of species, many of whom cannot survive in any other type of environment. For humans, it provides a home away from home, a refuge and renewal. For scientists, it is an incomparable data bank and laboratory.

Even more fundamentally, the kinds of life that exist on earth today can not exist without the forests. Almost all of the water we use flows ultimately from forests, and forests help prevent flooding and erosion.

Further, trees produce the oxygen that is essential in maintaining the ozone layer, the part of our atmosphere that protects the earth from being irradiated by the sun's ultraviolet energy. The cutting down of vast amounts of forest all over the globe amounts to what the movie *The Blue Planet* calls "an uncontrolled experiment" on an incredible scale. The results? We may be about to find out, for scientists be-

lieve they have discovered a hole the size of Australia in the ozone layer above Antarctica.

Strategy for survival. The ecological issues riding on the wings of the spotted owl explain much of the force and urgency behind the campaign to save the bird. At the center of the storm over the owl's future is what is known as the

of the areas to be home to as many as 20 pairs of owls instead of one or two or three and achieves shorter distances between owl habitats. The Habitat Conservation Areas would be a string of separate but interrelated islands—a forest archipelago—from the Canadian border to the north of San Francisco.

Michael Anderson, a Seattle forest plan-

together in May 1990 by a joint Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management (BLM) team. It makes concrete proposals for improving the lot of the timber communities which will be hurt by logging reductions.

Bush's own task force neglected to suggest *any* short-term remedies to help unemployed woodworkers and their families and towns.

It did, however, recommend immediate activation of the "God Squad," an appointed Cabinet committee chaired by Lujan which has the ability to override decisions about protecting vanishing species that conflict too strenuously with the sacred right to make a fast buck.

The Senate voted against letting the God Squad broker the fate of the ancient forests.

Meanwhile, others were also attempting to bushwhack Thomas' plan. An Oregon labor official attacked it as "voodoo biology," and Oregon Senator Robert Packwood tried in vain to block it.

Despite opposition, the Thomas strategy has a chance of being implemented in some form. The Forest Service has basically embraced the plan and announced that FS timber sales will be arranged in a manner "not inconsistent with" the report. The BLM, the other major caretaker of federal forests, is willing to conform to most parts of the strategy, but quarrels with others. Battles are raging state by state over the plan's application on private lands.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is now forming a team to put together an owl recovery plan, which they are required by law to do for all endangered and threatened species. Nevertheless, recovery plans have been adopted for only half the listed species.

Junk bonds, junk planet. While the bureaucracy fiddles, the forests fall. But no matter how fast the timber hits the ground, it

won't be fast enough for Texan Charles Hurwitz.

Hurwitz, of MAXXAM Inc., is typical of a new strain of timber baron nurtured during the greed-is-good '80s. Hurwitz financed his takeover of California's Pacific Lumber Company with junk bonds. His partners? Michael Milken and Boyd Jeffries, both since convicted of felonies. This is one of the deals that Ivan Boesky made millions from through inside information.

With interest payments on his debt financing approaching \$79 million a year, Hurwitz realized that he needed to liquidate his assets—fast.

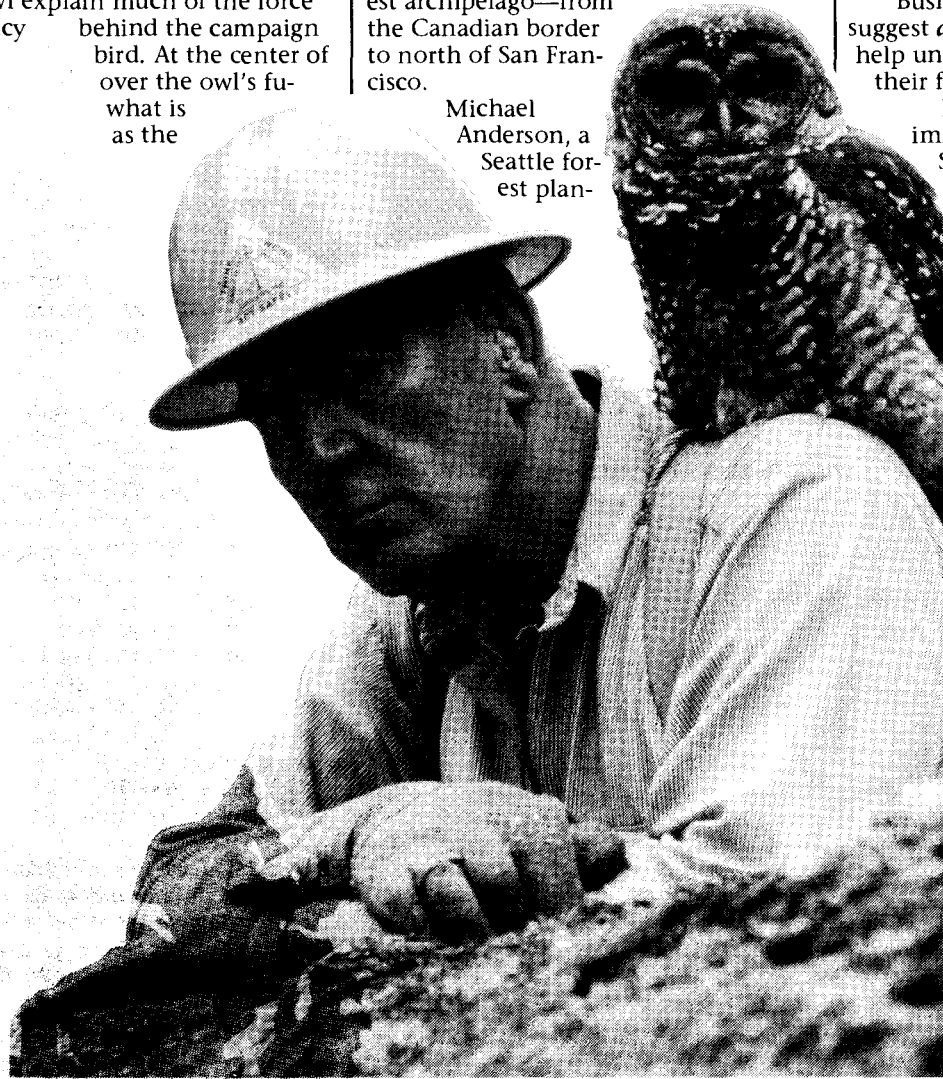
His assets are most of the last of the ancient redwoods. He has ordered that they be clearcut three times as quickly as the previous rate.

The pattern is the same all up and down the forest corridor. Britain's Sir James Goldsmith bought up Diamond International between 1982 and 1988 and Crown Zellerbach in 1984. Georgia Pacific ate up Great Northern Nekoosa and Great Northern Paper. It owns ecosystems all over the world and is now eyeing the grand Siberian forest.

All these corporate raiders want is money, and they want it in a hurry. Companies now put lights on the logging equipment so that crews can work through the night—as well as on the weekends.

And they're getting what they're after. The years 1987-1989 were the best ever for the Northwest timber industry. More trees were felled in the national forests than ever before, and profits were high. In 1988, a record 10.8 billion board feet were cut.

But in the same year, ten thou-
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Brian Lankester

Jobs vs. ecology

A dilemma manufactured by the profit system

Ward Thomas report.

Thomas, a chief biologist for the Forest Service, is an internationally known wildlife scientist and award-winning author. A former Texan, he began work as a game biologist because he enjoyed hunting and fishing.

The Forest Service has operated historically as an enthusiastic, uncritical seller of public trees to the timber industry. Under its stewardship, the national forests have been managed in order to bolster the brisk trade in wood. Enhancement of forest recreational use has run a distant second. Ecological concerns have drawn active opposition.

In response to legal and political organizing by environmentalists, the Forest Service has shifted its orientation somewhat over the past few years. But external pressure is not the only cause of this change. Thomas believes the entrance of women into the agency has been the main lever pushing it into a more pro-conservation posture.

Says Thomas, "Women have a tendency to be more persistent. They are less apt to immediately succumb to authority. Their persistence is a form of toughness."

Thomas led a committee which was mandated by the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, and the National Park Service to "develop a scientifically credible conservation strategy for the northern spotted owl."

They developed a plan which prescribes that large amounts of old-growth forest be preserved in their natural state—which means off limits to the timber barons. Thomas' proposal calls for setting aside more forest than earlier strategies did. This allows most

ning specialist with the Wilderness Society, acknowledges the scientific credibility of the Thomas report, crediting it with "incorporating the newest concepts like island biogeography."

But, Anderson says, "The plan allows areas that are currently the owls' best habitat to get badly hacked up."

Thomas' recommendations protect just enough ancient forest to ensure the survival of the owl as a species, possibly with its numbers cut in half, for the next hundred years. This is not the best news the owl has ever had—though it may be the best *recent* news—and it allows for the continued sale of several billions of board feet of national timber every year to the industry.

Attack by bureaucracy. Even so, the Thomas report is now being chewed over and chopped up like the forest. Predictably, what doesn't go far enough for environmentalists goes way too far for the logging companies and their buddies in politics and the labor union bureaucracy.

Bush's Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan branded as unacceptable the Thomas recommendations to rein in logging sales on public lands. Bush then launched a task force whose stated goal was to balance the need to preserve jobs against the need to protect the owl. Its real purpose was to see how far it could erode the Thomas plan without directly challenging the report as a whole.

This is borne out by the suppression of a document modestly titled "Actions the Administration May Wish to Consider in Implementing a Conservation Strategy for the Northern Spotted Owl." This unpublished paper was put