

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

DEFEND THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

Carter stalls aid, seeks to strangle freedom fight



MANAGUA, August 3—Thousands of Nicaraguans from working-class and poor neighborhoods rally in support of revolution.

Militant/Fred Murphy

**Fidel Castro
calls for
solidarity
with Nicaragua**

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Workers and peasants

By Pedro Camejo,
Sergio Rodríguez
and Fred Murphy

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—The socialist revolution has begun in Nicaragua.

Under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the workers and peasants have overthrown the imperialist-backed Somoza dictatorship and destroyed its army and police force.

Basing itself on the power of the armed and mobilized masses, the Sandinista leadership has begun taking a series of radical measures—a deepgoing land reform, nationalization of all the country's banks, seizure of all the property held by the Somoza family and its collaborators, the formation of popular militias and a revolutionary

Pedro Camejo, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, and Sergio Rodríguez, a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party of Mexico, went to Nicaragua to gather first-hand information for the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist organization, and for Trotskyists around the world. Fred Murphy is a correspondent for the 'Militant' and 'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor,' who has been in Nicaragua covering the revolutionary developments there.

army, the organization of committees in the factories and neighborhoods, and other steps.

An active solidarity campaign among working people throughout the world is urgently needed. Supplies of food, medicine, and other basic necessities are critically low. Massive aid is needed to begin the process of reconstructing the country.

The imperialist powers, most notably the United States, are implacable enemies of this revolution. They are withholding material aid, seeking weak points in the revolution, and preparing their countermeasures.

An immediate military threat exists. Entire units of Somoza's National Guard left the country and are being maintained intact in neighboring Honduras and El Salvador. The slogan "Hands off Nicaragua!" should now become the international rallying cry for all those who support the right of the Nicaraguans to determine for themselves what kind of government



Victorious Nicaraguans drag statue of Somoza's father through streets of Managua

and what kind of society they want to construct to replace the Somoza tyranny.

The Nicaraguan workers, peasants, and semi-proletarian masses are coming onto the center stage of history. They are led by a revolutionary current, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

Land reform

A high percentage of the arable land in the country was owned by Somoza and his immediate circle. This land has been nationalized. Under the direction of Sandinista leader Jaime Wheelock, the Nicaraguan Institute of Agrarian Reform has been set up. INRA is supervising the distribution of these vast holdings to the thousands of Nicaraguan peasants who have historically eked out a subsistence on tiny plots.

Those sections of land best suited for large-scale farming are being used to set up state enterprises that will provide permanent employment for thousands of agricultural laborers.

The land reform is being enthusiastically welcomed by the peasants and farm workers, who have mobilized in large demonstrations. Peasant militias are being organized to defend the new

property relations in the countryside.

For now, the Sandinistas say they are limiting the land reform to the Somocista (Somozaist) holdings. However, when reporters asked INRA director Wheelock what they will do if the lands run out and there are still needy peasants, he answered: "We'll take the rest of it."

The land reform is crucial for the Nicaraguan revolution, because sixty percent of the population lives in the countryside. Nicaragua's main export products are all agricultural—cotton, coffee, sugar, and beef.

In addition to all the Somocista property, the new government has also nationalized all of Nicaragua's banks. This gives it control over the vast bulk of the country's industrial wealth. This will be crucial for reactivating the economy, providing jobs, and meeting the needs of the workers and peasants.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, headed by Lea Guido de López, has announced decrees against all kinds of speculators and profiteers, decrees characterized by a deeply egalitarian spirit. The large number of buildings formerly owned by Somoza and the Somocistas will not be monopolized by private individuals or government administrators for personal use. Instead, they are to be transformed into schools, child-care centers, sports centers, museums, and cultural centers.

Government control has been established over all important exportable agricultural commodities, including cotton, coffee, sugar, and fish.

Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega has announced the refusal to pay the debts that the Somoza dictatorship accumulated in buying arms used against the people.

Army and militia

The capitalist army and police force—Somoza's National Guard—was completely routed by the popular insurrection. There is nothing left of the Guard inside the country except for terrorist bands that continue to stage nighttime attacks on unarmed civilians and on Sandinista patrols. This is similar to the terrorist policy Washington carried out against Cuba, but it is far more intense. Firing can be heard nightly in the center of Managua.

But outside of these small bands, the capitalists have no armed forces within the borders of Nicaragua. The entire military apparatus has been dissolved. The masses are being armed.

The youth of Nicaragua are being integrated into a new revolutionary army. And the people in the workers districts and in the countryside who carried on the anti-Somoza struggle are being organized into militia units.

The Sandinista leaders are trying to move as rapidly as possible to build a strong, well-equipped, and well-trained army to meet the threat of foreign intervention and to put a stop to terrorist snipers.

In the cities—especially in the working-class and poor districts—Sandinista Defense Committees are being formed on a block-by-block basis to oversee the distribution of emergency food aid, organize the reconstruction of housing and other buildings destroyed by Somoza's bombings, and work with the Sandinista militias.

Workers in the factories, stores, banks, and other workplaces are also forming committees. These are usually elected by assemblies of all the workers. They are to form the basis of a new United Federation of Sandinista Workers, which will integrate the trade unions that existed under the dictatorship with the new workers committees. It is to include the agricultural proletariat as well.

The government has decreed that all wages lost by workers during the June-July insurrection must be paid in full. The workers committees are organizing to see that this is enforced.

The FSLN has called on Nicaraguan youth, who were in the front lines of the war against Somoza, to organize themselves in the "July 19 Sandinista Youth." There are also plans to form the "National Union of Nicaraguan Women," which is to be based on AMPRONAC, a group that mobilized women against the dictatorship.

Literacy campaign

The revolution's leaders have also announced some longer-range plans to improve the living conditions of the Nicaraguan people. Chief among these is an ambitious campaign against illiteracy modeled on the example of what was done in Cuba after the 1959 revolution there.

Some 60 percent of Nicaraguans do not know how to read and write. To remedy this situation, 1980 had been declared the "Year of Education." Brigades of teachers—many of them high-school and college students—will soon begin being trained to carry out the literacy drive. They will fan out to all

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'Perspectiva Mundial' is the Spanish-language sister publication of the 'Militant.' It, like the 'Militant,' is launching a campaign to get out the truth about the Nicaraguan revolution. Fidel Castro's speech, along with other material that is in this special issue of the 'Militant,' is available in Spanish in the new special issue of 'Perspectiva Mundial.' 'PM' will continue its coverage of Nicaragua with eyewitness accounts from reporters on the scene, reprints from 'Barricada' (the Sandinista newspaper) and more.

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fight for new Nicaragua

the cities, towns, and villages of Nicaragua to teach basic skills.

Other steps being planned include the construction of clinics and child-care centers, and the introduction of family-planning programs to make safe methods of birth-control available to all women.

Revolutionary mobilizations

The way for all these revolutionary measures was opened by the mass upheaval that brought down the imperialist-backed Somoza dictatorship. In the course of the struggle, the Sandinista National Liberation Front came to the head of the insurgent masses.

The upsurge that brought forty-five years of Somoza tyranny to an end began in January 1978. Outraged by the assassination of opposition newspaper editor Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the urban masses of Managua and other major cities carried out street demonstrations and a two-week general strike against Somoza.

In March 1978, uprisings against the National Guard took place in the combative Indian communities of Monimbó in Masaya and Subtiava in León. Strikes by students and workers, protest marches, and clashes with the National Guard went on constantly during subsequent months.

In August 1978, the Sandinista Front staged a spectacular raid on the National Palace in Managua. They held dozens of Somocista politicians hostage for several days and secured the release of all Sandinista prisoners—including central leader Tomás Borge—and the payment of a large sum of money.

The raid captured the imagination of the Nicaraguan people and greatly enhanced the FSLN's popularity. Thousands turned out to cheer as the victorious commando unit drove from the National Palace to the airport with its hostages.

The August raid was quickly followed by uprisings in several major cities. Civil war raged for three weeks, and only by brutally bombing the civilian population was Somoza's National Guard able to achieve a temporary victory.

As a result of the September experience, the masses became convinced that only an all-out military drive could dislodge the dictatorship.

Under the leadership of the Sandinista Front and the United People's



Sandinistas in Masaya gather for tribute under portrait of slain liberation fighter

Movement (a coalition of trade unions, working-class parties, student groups, and other organizations), committees and militia units were set up, arms were gathered, emergency food supplies were stashed away, and courses were taught in street fighting, barricade-building, and the use of weapons.

At the same time, hundreds of youth who had fled the cities after September were given military training and organized into fighting units of the FSLN.

The final offensive

The final offensive against the dictatorship began May 29 when Sandinista columns launched attacks on National Guard positions near the Costa Rican border.

On June 4, a general strike called by the FSLN shut down nearly all industry, transportation, and commerce in Nicaragua.

City after city fell to the rebels in subsequent weeks. The noose tightened around Somoza, who was holed up in his "bunker" in Managua, the capital.

An eyewitness to the struggles in Managua, journalist Melvin Wallace, described the events there in an interview with the *Militant*:

"The insurrection in Managua really began on June 10. As always, the eastern districts of the city—the working-class districts, the areas where the poor population lives—were the ones most active in the insurrection.

"Barricades were built with whatever materials available. The streets of Managua are made of paving

stones, which are easily removed and used for barricades. As a matter of fact, these stones were all produced in Somoza's cement factory. They were indispensable for the building of barricades throughout the city.

"The National Guard followed the same tactics it had used in September, regrouping in its central barracks, abandoning the smaller posts and entrenching itself in others. Many smaller barracks were attacked and destroyed by the insurrectionary forces in struggles that lasted one or two days.

"What took place here was a popular insurrection, in the fullest political and military sense of the term. The masses participated actively; they found ways to make arms—contact bombs and molotov cocktails; they recovered small arms, .22 caliber pistols, and so on.

"As the insurrection unfolded, the Guard began to concentrate its attacks, preceding them with 'aerial softening' with bombs weighing 150 to 500 pounds. Some fell on inhabited areas and caused severe damage."

On June 28, the organized Sandinista forces were obliged by the Guard counterattack to retreat from Managua.

Wallace continued:

"The situation partially returned to 'normal.' But the general strike [of shopkeepers, artisans, and workers] continued. The Somocista forces were impotent; they couldn't even restore basic public services."

Elsewhere in the country, the Sandinista offensive gained momentum. After failing to gain any support from Latin American regimes for a military intervention, Washington decided to force Somoza to resign in hopes of preventing the revolutionary overthrow of the dictatorship. Somoza and many of his top generals fled to Miami on July 17. Francisco Urcuyo was named president and a new general staff was designated for the National Guard.

It was widely believed that Urcuyo would simply hand power over to the provisional government already named by the Sandinistas. But instead, Somoza's successor declared over nationwide television that he intended to stay until 1981. Wallace explained what happened next in Managua:

"After Urcuyo's speech, skepticism turned to popular anger. That same night you could hear the clanging of pots and pans, the sound of small demonstrations.

"As word spread the next day that rebel forces were on the march toward Managua, people came into the streets without fear. I saw many demonstrations, thousands and thousands of people in the middle-class and working-class districts, even while the National Guard was still confronting the people in the streets.

"Throughout the night there were bonfires, demonstrations, the clanging of pots and pans. People went right into the Guardsmen's houses and took their arms. The Guardsmen were desperate.

"Desertions from the Guard numbered in the thousands, while the masses marched forward. And if the people didn't collect all the arms from the Guard in their homes, they took away the rest of them in their barracks."

Urcuyo and the remaining generals fled early in the morning on July 19, while their army was collapsing underneath them. Thousands of Managuans gathered at the "bunker" a short time later, along with an FSLN column that had just arrived from León. Wallace continued:

"At first, the people stopped about 200 meters from the bunker, still cautious. There were rumors that the bunker had been mined, that there were still snipers posted there, that some Guardsmen would still put up resistance. But this did not happen.

"The Sandinista troops from León marched into the bunker behind a small tank. They asked the people to wait, but the people paid no attention. They went in, broke down doors, poured through the offices, the arsenals, everywhere. Some were curious, others sought arms, others came simply to be able to say 'I was there.' There must have been more than 10,000 persons who went into the bunker that morning.

"The bunker was not just Somoza's residence; all the major military installations were located there. The people went in, the militia went in; there was euphoria, happiness. Many weapons were confiscated by the people; they found high-caliber arms, and uniforms. Their joy is difficult to put into words.

"Little by little, order was restored. By two in the afternoon, other guerrilla columns were entering the city—from Masaya, from Estelí and Matagalpa, from Rivas. All hurried to be the first to enter Managua; all were cheered and applauded by the people. They began to take up positions, to take charge of the military installations, and to organize themselves."

The Sandinista Front

In the course of the nineteen-month upsurge that finally brought down the Somoza dynasty, the Sandinista National Liberation Front came to be the undisputed leadership of the revolution. Its bold actions against the dictator's armed forces and its determination to destroy Somozism root and branch led the masses to view it in this way.

The FSLN is rooted in Nicaragua's long tradition of anti-imperialist struggle and plebeian radicalism. It takes its name from Augusto César Sandino,

Continued on next page

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a former oilfield mechanic and mine worker who led a seven-year guerrilla war against the U.S. Marines from 1927 to 1934. When all the bourgeois-nationalist forces capitulated to the imperialists and their puppets, Sandino and his worker and peasant forces continued to fight.

Sandino was assassinated on the orders of General Anastasio Somoza García in 1934, but the memory of his struggle lived on in Nicaragua. In 1962, Sandino's tradition fused with the fresh wave of radicalism that swept Nicaraguan youth after the victory of the Cuban revolution.

Founded by Carlos Fonseca Amador and other young rebels who broke with the reformism of the Stalinist Nicaraguan Socialist Party, the FSLN regrouped those who wanted to learn from the Cuban experience and end the imperialist domination of Nicaragua.

The Sandinistas experienced many setbacks in their repeated efforts to defeat Somoza's National Guard through guerrilla warfare. Most of the original cadres lost their lives—Carlos Fonseca himself was murdered by the Guard in 1976. But when the masses began to move against Somoza in

sion in Nicaragua for three days in a row and became a favorite topic of discussion.

The immediate tasks now facing the FSLN and the entire Nicaraguan people—feeding the population, getting production under way, rebuilding the country—are enormous.

The effects of the civil war were qualitatively more devastating than what the Cubans faced in 1959 after the overthrow of Batista. Many of Nicaragua's factories were destroyed. Cities were left in ruins. Many crops were not planted because of the fighting. Some estimates run as high as 40,000-50,000 people killed—2 percent of the country's population.

There is hunger inside Nicaragua today. There just isn't enough food and the international aid isn't sufficient.

Alfonso Robelo, a member of the five-person Government of National Reconstruction, told the July 26 rally in Holguín, Cuba: "We have found a country destroyed. Destroyed by the bombs dropped by Somoza's air force, which bombed our cities indiscriminately. Destroyed as a result of 45 years of plunder by a corrupt regime. In fact, what we have now is a completely bankrupt country: our reserves were plundered; the people's money, down to the last cent, was spent on weapons to use against the people. . . ."

Robelo also outlined the goals the government has set for itself: "We must rebuild our economy; we must provide food for our population that is presently suffering terrible shortages; we must carry out a gigantic literacy campaign so that the more than 60 percent of our people who are now illiterate will learn how to read and write; we must see to it that every Nicaraguan child has a school, no matter how humble, to begin the next school year; we need doctors to go into our countryside for the first time and provide medical care for our peasants. And for all these tasks we need the assistance of all the sister peoples of the Americas, and the people of Cuba have a special place in this process."

The masses of Nicaragua want a society of equality. They want an end to the plunder of their resources and the exploitation of their people by U.S. corporations. They want to build a new Nicaragua in which—as in revolutionary Cuba—the needs of the workers and peasants come first, not capitalist profits. And they have shown that they are ready to do whatever is necessary to achieve these goals.

What Washington fears

That is why Washington hates and fears the revolutionary process under way in Nicaragua. Those who have profited from the misery of the Nicaraguan people for decades know that full employment, higher living standards, land for the peasants, democratic rights for the masses, and freedom from foreign domination are all incom-



One of few portraits of Somoza left intact hangs on fence at Managua military installation. 'Perro' means 'dog.'

patible with continued capitalist rule in Nicaragua.

What the U.S. capitalists fear most is that the FSLN and the Nicaraguan workers and peasants—organized, armed, and determined—will follow the example of Cuba.

Nicaragua under Somoza was a bastion of U.S. domination over the entire region—the launching pad for the CIA-sponsored invasions of Guatemala in 1954 and Cuba in 1961. Nicaragua under the FSLN has already become an inspiration to the workers and peasants throughout Latin America, especially in neighboring Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, all suffering under U.S.-backed dictatorships.

Thus, while the governments of the United States and the European capitalist countries pretend to be sympathetic to the needs and aspirations of the Nicaraguan people, they are scheming to block the revolutionary process and to roll back the gains it has made.

One side of their counterrevolutionary plan is military: maintaining Somoza's forces in Honduras, El Salvador, and Miami. It takes a lot of money to keep these troops armed and organized for any length of time, and that money can have only one source: Washington.

But overt military action by Washington against Nicaragua faces big obstacles. Working people in the United States are adamantly opposed to any new Vietnams. They don't want to be sent to fight and die to impose dictatorships subservient to Washington.

Moreover, even a camouflaged U.S. military operation would provoke a massive protest in the United States and throughout Latin America. What is even worse, from Washington's point of view, is that such a limited military move might not succeed. It is likely that a Bay of Pigs style invasion of Nicaragua would confront not only the armed people of Nicaragua, but the battle-hardened combat forces of revolutionary Cuba as well.

As Fidel warned on July 26, U.S. military intervention would mean "a gigantic Vietnam . . . throughout Central America and in the rest of Latin America, a gigantic Vietnam."

Before playing that last desperate card, the U.S. imperialists are first trying economic blackmail and maneuvers. The aid coming from the U.S. government—a tiny amount, grudgingly given—is intended to make it easier for Washington to demand political concessions from the Nicaraguan government.

Instead of the 300 tons a day of food desperately needed in Nicaragua, as little as 40 to 80 tons a day are reportedly arriving. FSLN leader Tomás Borge charges that Washington has already gone back on what was promised. After all the devastation the U.S. government has brought on Nicaragua in the past decades, Washington's aid for reconstruction so far amounts to a mere \$5.4 million, of which \$1.2 million was spent to get the aid there.

The U.S. aid has still another purpose: to drive a wedge into the Sandinistas, to split them, to try to find some

sectors that would, under economic pressure, begin to bend to Washington's demands and help strengthen and consolidate the capitalist forces that still exist in Nicaragua and that are part of the formal government, the Government of National Reconstruction.

Here too, judging from the actions of the FSLN leadership, the imperialists are not meeting with success. Far from drawing back, the FSLN leaders are moving forward in mobilizing and arming the masses to fight for their interests.

Countering imperialists

The FSLN leaders are fighting to gain time to counter the imperialist maneuvers and to win broad international support. They are fighting to get as much material aid as they possibly can for the Nicaraguan people. And they are trying to make it as difficult as possible for the imperialists to find pretexts to intervene.

This means making concessions. For example, the Sandinistas have announced that they do not plan to execute any of the captured National Guard, not even the worst murderers and torturers. This concession has made it harder for the imperialists to mount a lying propaganda offensive claiming that the revolution has resulted in a bloodbath, the way they did when the Cubans executed a few hundred of Batista's police torturers.

As Fidel noted in his July 26 speech, the "magnanimity and generosity" of the Sandinistas will "deprive the reactionaries of arguments, it will deprive them of weapons, it will deprive them of fuel for slander and defamation."

Fidel added, "Of course, we are not going to deceive ourselves. We're not going to imagine that the reactionaries will leave the Nicaraguan Revolution in peace, despite its magnanimity, generous attitude and democratic aims."

The composition of the official Government of National Reconstruction represents a concession. Three of its five members are from the procapitalist forces that opposed Somoza. Only one is a leading Sandinista. So in form it is a coalition government with the Sandinistas in a minority.

The reality is different. The reality is that Nicaragua today is being run by the Joint National Directorate of the FSLN, made up of nine Sandinista commanders. All nine are Fidelistas. All have lived in exile in Cuba.

Real power is in the hands of the FSLN. With each capitalist minister in the government they have put a Sandinista commander. And the ministers do not act unless the Sandinistas approve their actions.

Even within this context the Sandinistas have taken certain further steps. For example, they removed the original minister in charge of agrarian reform, who was a landowner. In his place they put Jaime Wheelock, a central FSLN leader—one of the nine.

The officially designated minister of defense is a former officer of Somoza's National Guard who switched sides before the civil war. But he has no



1978, the Sandinistas were there to provide the revolutionary leadership necessary to oust the dictator.

Throughout their history, the FSLN fighters have enjoyed the active solidarity of the Cuban revolution. Cuba provided military training and material aid to the guerrilla struggle from the beginning. Now, with the revolutionary victory, Cuba is sending medical teams, teachers, and other aid to help in the reconstruction of Nicaragua.

Throughout Cuba, the workers and peasants have celebrated the victory in Nicaragua as if it were their own. As Fidel Castro put it, Cubans "see ourselves mirrored in [the Nicaraguans], because nothing reminds us more of our own struggles, our sacrifices and our own image in those early days of the revolution."

'Workers & peasants to power'

Since coming to power, the Sandinistas have continued to mobilize the workers and peasants. On August 3, for example, the FSLN called for a march and rally to dedicate a highway in Managua to the martyrs of the struggle. The march was built through the Civil Defense Committees.

Fifty thousand people turned out, from Managua's total population of about 300,000. The vast bulk of the marchers came in organized contingents from the poor and working-class neighborhoods, with handwritten signs in support of the revolution. They chanted slogans like "Workers and peasants to power" and "Somoza and the Yankees—they're the same thing." There was a high consciousness that this revolution belongs to the poor, to the workers and peasants.

Such consciousness is being encouraged by the FSLN. Radio Sandino and the Sandinista National (television) Network broadcast revolutionary songs and speeches and carry news of anti-imperialist struggles in other countries. The FSLN's daily paper, *Barricada*, serves a similar purpose. It places special emphasis on the importance of organizing the popular committees, the trade unions, the militias, and a strong army to defend the gains of the revolution.

Fidel Castro's July 26 speech hailing the revolution was broadcast on televi-



AUGUSTO CESAR SANDINO

army or police. Those are run by the FSLN. Sandinista political leaders are in every battalion of the new army.

In the struggle against Somoza the Sandinistas consciously tried to create the broadest possible front, including bourgeois forces who were opponents of Somoza. That was obviously the correct, intelligent, and revolutionary policy.

But once they came to power, they did not want that same coalition running the government. They express this in their own way.

Right after Somoza fell, Henry Ruiz, one of the top nine FSLN leaders, tried to explain to the Costa Rican weekly *Pueblo* who should govern Nicaragua. He said:

"I believe that effectively we have to take the composition of the Provisional Government junta with caution. Because it appears to me that the initial mechanism is not complete. . . . Other mechanisms have to appear that are the real base of power. The government junta can represent those forces, but the decisions will be taken at another level.

"I'm inclined to think that we should have the representation of the workers, as well as representation of the peasants, who were those who have carried the weight of the war in these times."

Talking about what individuals should be put in government positions, Ruiz said:

"To say, how should I say it, that X person because he has written three or four books, or X person because they own a business, or that person because I like him, or I consider him an honest person, . . . It appears to me that would be to disconnect the question of class. Here we have to have our workers, our peasants, and also the revolutionaries represented."

And in conclusion he said: "We have to have representative figures that really will not betray the interests of the revolution."

The Sandinista leadership is trying



Masaya, August 2: Sandinista singing group Pancacán performs for crowd at rally honoring those slain in anti-Somoza struggle. Militant/Fred Murphy

to mobilize the workers and peasants to deepen this revolution, to defend and move forward the interests of the Nicaraguan masses.

A revolutionary power

The power that exists today in Nicaragua is a revolutionary power. The road is open to move toward the establishment of a workers and peasants government—that is, a government independent of the old ruling classes, which mobilizes the power of the workers and their allies to implement progressive social measures that more and more challenge the economic prerogatives of capital.

A workers and peasants government has not yet been established. While capitalism has been dealt a stunning blow, it still exists. The capitalists and those determined to defend their interests still remain a factor in the govern-

ment. Nevertheless, the direction in which the Sandinista leadership is moving is toward deepening the revolutionary mobilization of the masses to defend their interests.

The Sandinistas have proven themselves to be a revolutionary leadership in overthrowing the Somoza dictatorship and destroying the old armed forces of the capitalists. And they are proving themselves in action after taking power, by mobilizing and arming the masses to defend their own interests.

There is no way of knowing in advance how far the Sandinista leadership will go in changing the character of the state, or at what pace. There are no guarantees. But the only way for revolutionary socialists around the world to help advance the Nicaraguan revolution is to recognize the revolutionary capacities of this leadership, to identify with it, and to join forces with it in the struggle to defend and extend the revolution.

The working class of the entire world will see the Nicaraguan revolution as its own. Nicaragua will gain enormous solidarity from the workers of other countries, including the United States.

Revolutionary Cuba has set the example by its self-sacrificing support and by calling on all countries to compete in sending reconstruction aid to Nicaragua. The Cubans have been waiting and working for this victory for twenty years. For the first time, they are not alone in this hemisphere. Their dedication to the Nicaraguan cause should inspire a wave of solidarity throughout the Americas.

The choice in Nicaragua

The choice in Nicaragua is either to move forward to the victory of a socialist revolution, as in Cuba—or to suffer a bloody defeat, as in Chile. Either the

Sandinistas will consolidate the power of the workers and peasants and deepen the revolution into a socialist transformation, or they will be beaten back by imperialism in a counterrevolutionary blow that will drown in blood the entire generation that has made this revolution. There is no third road.

In this historic battle the Sandinista leadership will be tested many times over—their ability to mobilize the masses, maneuver and fight intelligently, move the revolutionary process forward, and be decisive when it is necessary.

Nicaragua is also a test for the Cuban leadership, the Fidelistas—a test of their ability to give revolutionary leadership in Latin America.

Finally, Nicaragua is a test for the Fourth International—whether the world Trotskyist movement can mobilize an international campaign of solidarity and defense, and thus help the Nicaraguan revolution advance. No sectarianism or factionalism can be allowed to stand in the way of our identification with and defense of the Nicaraguan revolution.

The Sandinistas have a slogan, a quote from Sandino, whose meaning they feel very deeply. They say that "the sons of Sandino neither sell out nor give up. They will be free or dead."

That is the commitment they are making here inside Nicaragua. They are organizing and educating the workers and peasants, the entire young generation, to prepare to give their lives to free Nicaragua and through that to help the Latin American and world revolution.

They must know that they will have the Fourth International at their side, that Trotskyist parties around the world will organize to help them and stand with them along the road to the second workers state in Latin America.

Forums on Nicaragua

ILLINOIS CHICAGO

THE UNFOLDING NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION: ITS MEANING FOR AMERICAN WORKERS. Speaker: Malik Miah, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Sat., August 25, 7:30 p.m. Donation \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (312) 939-0737.

FLORIDA MIAMI

NIGHT OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE: DEMAND UNCONDITIONAL AND IMMEDIATE AID TO NICARAGUA! FREEZE SOMOZA'S HOLDINGS AND RETURN THEM TO NICARAGUAN PEOPLE! EXTRADITE SOMOZA! Speakers: Franklin Chavez, Nicaraguan Consul in Miami; Prof. Mark Rosenberg, Dir. of Caribbean and Latin American Studies Council, Florida International Univ.; and representative of the Haiti Kobot Libete. Also film: "Patria Libre o Morir". Sat., August 25, 7 p.m.,

reception; 9 p.m., film. Center for Dialogue, 2675 NW 22nd Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Miami Committee for Non-Intervention in Nicaragua. For more information call (305) 635-4085.

OHIO TOLEDO

THE UNFOLDING NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION: ITS MEANING FOR AMERICAN WORKERS. Speaker: Peter Archer, member United Auto Workers Local 14. Sun., August 26, 7 p.m. 2120 Dorr St. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (419) 536-0383.

TEXAS DALLAS

DEFEND THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION! U.S. HANDS OFF! Speaker: representative of the Socialist Workers Party. Sat., August 25, 8:00 p.m. 5442 East Grand. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (214) 826-4711.

Bank workers: 'Strike like a sledge hammer'

The following article appeared in the August 6 issue of the Managua daily *'Barricada,'* official organ of the Sandinista National Liberation Front. The translation is by Harvey McArthur.

In response to a call by the Union of Workers in Banking and Finance, more than 600 of the thousands of bank workers throughout the country met Saturday afternoon [August 4] in the Casa del Obrero. Their aim was to get the banking system in operation again and to form Sandinista Defense Committees.

The workers from the various banking and financial institutions named representatives to form an internal committee that will be responsible for organizing the banking and finance workers into one federation—a workers front that would subsequently affiliate with the United Federation of Sandinista Workers.

The organization of the banking and financial employees is of great importance, since it will be one of the unions with the largest number of

workers. Moreover, workers at each banking or financial institution will name a representative to the board of directors of the institution where they work. This means that the workers will play an active and decisive role in the decisions that our country's banking system will take.

From clandestinity to legality

The Union of Banking and Financial Workers (SITRABANIF), which emerged a little more than two years ago under the leadership of the United People's Movement (MPU), is one of those union movements in the history of our country that was forced to work underground in order to survive.

While other unions, some federations, and some political parties had access to the means of communication to report on their activities and the attacks they suffered at the hands of the dictatorship, this door was closed to SITRABANIF. It was gagged and persecuted not only by the dictatorial regime but also by the groups in power, including the financial oligarchy whose tentacles of control and exploitation reached into all the country's

productive activities.

Statements by the union were frequently presented to the communications media—both radio and the press—to inform the people of the demands being raised. But despite the good will of innumerable journalists, the union was never able to express itself freely through the mass media.

Today, thanks to the nationalization of the banking system, carried out by our revolutionary government, the banking and financial employees can not only express their concerns and aspirations freely but can also participate in the administration of the institutions in which they work.

CGT representative speaks

Sebastián Castro of the General Workers Federation (CGT) spoke at the meeting of the bank workers. He stressed the importance of the triumph of the Nicaraguan people led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, and how that victory affects everything that happens in the country.

He spoke of the different definitions of a union, *Continued on page 14*

Statement of Fourth International

For world campaign to defend Nicaragua

The following statement was issued by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on August 15, based on reports from its observers in Nicaragua (see article on page two).

On January 1, 1959, the Batista dictatorship was swept away by the military offensive of the Rebel Army and the mobilization of the Cuban masses led by the July 26 Movement. On July 19, 1979, the bloody Somoza regime in Nicaragua, installed and maintained by American imperialism for more than forty years, was overthrown by a massive nationwide popular insurrection that capped a coordinated offensive by the rebel armed forces of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

The popular insurrection led not only to the overthrow of the dictatorship but to the dismantlement of the old regime. The mobilization of the masses in popular committees as well as the revolutionary measures already taken in the short time since the overthrow of the hated regime, indicate the proletarian and plebeian dynamic of the process now unfolding.

The toilers of the entire world could not have hoped for a more magnificent celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution! The road has been opened that can lead to the victory of the second socialist revolution of the Americas.

But imperialism will be doing everything possible to try to prevent the toiling masses of Nicaragua from moving forward on this road.

With the same cold-blooded brutality with which they propped up Somoza to the bitter end, the imperialists are now bringing into play diplomatic, economic, and military resources to try to stop the revolutionary upsurge.

There is no more urgent task for the world workers movement than to mobilize in opposition to them.

The American people demonstrated during the Vietnam War that Washington no longer had a free hand to use its murderous military machine. Today the American working people can play a decisive role in staying the hand of the Pentagon in Central America. This would weaken the imperialists and strengthen the working class of the United States. It would be the greatest possible aid to the Nicaraguan people.

* * *

Devastation by civil war

Nicaragua has been devastated by the civil war. In his ruthless attempt to maintain power, Somoza ordered the bombing of neighborhoods and factories. He plundered the monetary resources of the country.

More than 1 million people are in need of food. More than 300 tons of food are required per day. Tens of thousands of refugees are seeking to return to the country, and will have to be cared for.

Agriculture has been totally disrupted by the months of civil war. Industrial investments were blocked. Hundreds of factories stopped production.

To defend the revolution and solve this crisis is an enormous task.

* * *

The American imperialists have been weakened by their defeat in Vietnam and by the blow they received by the downfall of the shah's regime in Iran. But they are attempting to take advantage of every weak spot in the Nicaraguan revolution to try to prevent a new Cuba. They will intensify threats against revolutionary Cuba itself for its support to the Nicaraguan revolution.

Imperialism's goal is to try to restore the weight and decision-making capacity of the bourgeois elements in the "Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction" and other points of support for the bourgeoisie.

It is trying to utilize the European Social Democrats and some of the bourgeois democrats of Latin America as intermediaries for this policy. It seeks to pressure the FSLN leadership to renounce the economic inroads on capitalist property necessary to satisfy the elementary needs of the masses, and to stop the arming and mobilization of the masses, in return for economic aid.

The imperialist bourgeoisie, supposed defender of human rights, is using dribbles of the needed economic and food aid as blackmail. These imperialists—who have made famine into one of the most lucrative businesses for the agribusiness food



Militant/Fred Murphy

Somoza's air force rained U.S.-made bombs on Nicaragua's cities. Emergency aid is needed to repair massive destruction.

trust—have refused to send the 300 tons of food a day necessary to feed a people that they have helped plunder.

But imperialism depends above all on its own military striking force and those that it closely controls. It demonstrated this by organizing the retreat of well-armed units of Somoza's National Guard into Honduras and El Salvador. It is currently preparing for a possible military intervention along the lines of Guatemala in 1954, the Bay of Pigs in Cuba in 1961, or Santo Domingo in 1965.

Fidel Castro's government raised a warning even before the victory against Somoza: "The intervention of the United States would create a Vietnam in the very heart of Latin America. The Nicaraguan people and those of Central America would undoubtedly rise up against such foreign intervention, and their other brothers in Latin America and the Caribbean could not remain indifferent to such genocide."

On July 26, in front of representatives of the FSLN and the Cuban people, Fidel Castro pointed to the road that must be taken by all the workers states, in the framework of a call for aid from all countries:

"We invite the United States, we invite all the countries of Latin America, we invite all the countries of Europe, the countries of the Third World, our sister socialist nations, everybody, to take part in an emulation campaign to help Nicaragua. This is our position, in order to make a really human, really constructive effort, based on a spirit of emulation."

This kind of massive aid—which has already begun from Cuba—combined with the construction of a massive international solidarity movement with the Nicaraguan revolution, would be a powerful weapon against the criminal maneuvers of imperialism.

* * *

Following the Cuban road outlined by the Second Declaration of Havana, the road of permanent revolution, is the way for the Nicaraguan toilers to consolidate their victory.

In order to resist the pressures of Washington, to assert its complete independence of the imperialists, to press forward the agrarian reform, to expropriate all imperialist property and the big holdings of the national bourgeoisie, to assure control by the workers over industry and over domestic and foreign trade—to do these things the Cuban revolution had to break with the bourgeoisie, put an end to the coalition government installed in 1959, and set out on the course charted by the new workers and peasants government based on the armed and mobilized masses and organized by the July 26 Movement. In this way the Cubans were able to carry the revolution through to the end—the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a workers state.

The road to socialist revolution in Nicaragua is

mined with obstacles. Imperialist pressures and attacks will oblige the FSLN leadership to maneuver. The difficulties created by the lack of food and goods of all kinds will compel this leadership to try to gain time.

But these obstacles can be overcome, as the example of Cuba has shown, if the tremendous power and energy of the masses is organized.

The example of the Cuban revolution showed the close relationship between the upsurge and mobilization of the exploited and oppressed classes, the development of their consciousness according to the rhythms imposed by the revolution, and the evolution of consciousness of the leadership of the mass movement itself.

This will also be the factor that determines the future of the Nicaraguan revolution.

The Fourth International calls on the mass parties and organizations of the workers movement to build the broadest possible international movement—united and nonexclusionary—in support of the struggle of the Nicaraguan people and the fighters of the FSLN, whose courage has become a most precious heritage of the world proletariat.

Immediate aid to Nicaragua!

Imperialist hands off!

No threats against Cuba!

Solidarity with the Nicaraguan Revolution!

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For massive aid

SWP demands: U.S. hands off Nicaragua!

The following statement was issued August 15 by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party.

After forty-five years of bloody tyranny under the U.S.-imposed Somoza family dictatorship, the Nicaraguan people are beginning to take their destiny into their own hands.

Led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the workers and poor peasants are building unions, militias, a rebel army, peasant committees, and neighborhood committees to carry out the reconstruction of their war-torn country.

Working people in the United States readily identify with the Nicaraguans' fight for food, medical care, education, jobs, basic civil liberties, and other human rights for all.

But not the U.S. rulers. They have never wavered in their determination to crush this heroic people. They armed the Somoza regime to the teeth, providing the bombs and planes with which the dictator's National Guard pulverized the country in the months before Somoza fled to Miami. Washington bears full responsibility for the devastation and suffering in Nicaragua today.

The Carter administration remains determined to strangle the Nicaraguan revolution—just as Carter's predecessors Eisenhower and Kennedy tried to smash the Cuban revolution as it unfolded. If Carter thought he could get away with it, he would send thousands of troops to occupy Nicaragua today, just as Lyndon Johnson sent 25,000 U.S. troops to the Dominican Republic in 1965 when its people rose up against a despotic regime.

But there is widespread support among working people here and around the world for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters, who are seen as heroic opponents of a brutal dictatorship. And workers in the United States are deeply opposed to any new Vietnams, any use of U.S. military forces against such struggles.

For this reason Carter is trying to conceal his hostile moves against the Nicaraguan revolution behind promises of aid and a pose of open-handed generosity.

Carter wants to persuade U.S. public opinion that Washington is doing all it can for Nicaragua, and that the difficulties faced by the masses there are caused by the unreasonable actions and demands of the Sandinistas. Then, by labeling the Sandinistas as "extremists," Carter hopes to gull American workers into accepting more direct U.S. intervention against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Already the U.S. rulers are intensifying economic and military pressure on Nicaragua.

More than a million of Nicaragua's 2.4 million people are living in the shadow of hunger as a result of Somoza's scorched-earth policy. The new government has asked for at least 300 tons of food a day to block starvation.



U.S. troops occupy Santo Domingo in 1965. Carter is just as determined today to crush Nicaraguan revolution.

The response of revolutionary Cuba—itsself a small and poor country—has set an example for the world. The Castro government is not only providing food but offering thousands of doctors and teachers to help build a new Nicaragua.

But the Carter administration, which governs the world's leading food-producing nation, has offered only a tiny fraction of what is needed. And even this pittance is being withheld.

Red Cross officials report that "the amount of foreign food entering the country had been dropping, from 150 tons a day a few weeks ago to only 40 to 80 tons a day now," according to the August 6 *New York Times*.

Alfonso Robelo, a member of the new government, exposed Carter's duplicity and the reasons behind it: "In Washington they claim they are sending 120 tons of food a day for the Nicaraguan people but that is not exact, since the shipments by sea have not arrived and could be delayed just when we need them most. . . .

"There seems to be an attempt to hold up the aid with the idea of altering the nature of the process that seeks to establish a more equalitarian society. But anyone who intends to do that is mistaken since we are fighting for liberty and dignity for Nicaragua and in no way are we going to accept conditions on our sovereignty."

The response from Washington has been to threaten a cutoff of all aid: "If the criticism of the U.S. aid efforts continues, one official said, they're going to put us out of business," reported Charles A. Krause in the August 7 *Washington Post*.

Tightening military noose

Washington is also working behind the scenes to tighten a military noose

around the Nicaraguan workers and poor peasants, forcing them to devote massive resources to self-defense.

After nightfall in Managua and other cities, bands of pro-Somoza terrorists strike from ambush against working people and Sandinista fighters. In Honduras and El Salvador, thousands of U.S.-and Israeli-armed troops from Somoza's National Guard, including entire organized units, are being readied for new assaults on Nicaragua. What holds these mercenary forces together is Washington's support.

The military dictatorships in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala share Washington's determination to drive back the revolution in Nicaragua. They know that every advance by the Nicaraguan masses inspires workers and peasants throughout Central America to take on their exploiters.

"Defense Department and intelligence officials are urging that the U.S. resume arms shipments to the three nations," reported the August 13 *Time* magazine. Meanwhile, the Carter administration has turned a cold shoulder to Nicaragua's requests for arms for self-defense. Washington's moves to beef up reactionary regimes in the region pose a direct threat to the Nicaraguan revolution.

Any move against Nicaragua will also mean a threat against Cuba, which has clearly placed itself in the forefront of helping to defend the revolutionary victory of the Nicaraguan masses.

American working people have every reason to come to the aid of our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters. Our aspirations for a better life are the same. We share a common enemy. The billionaires' government that is withholding food from the Nicaraguan people today in order to starve them into submission

is the same government that controls our wages, breaks our strikes, and helps the oil barons hold us hostage.

American workers' stake

American working people have a life-and-death stake in blocking any moves by the Carter administration that could turn Nicaragua into another Vietnam. We should sound the alarm against any invasion, blockade, or other aggression against Nicaragua.

Working people in this country should demand that Carter stop stalling and provide the 300 tons of food a day that the Nicaraguan people desperately need. In addition, we can organize through our unions, groups in the Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Cuban communities, and on campus to raise food, clothing, and medical supplies for Nicaragua.

Our top priority must be to get out the truth about Nicaragua. The big-business news media are suppressing the facts about what the Nicaraguan workers and peasants are fighting for, how they are organizing, and what progressive changes they are already making.

Through special issues of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Socialist Workers Party pledges to help break through the news blackout. The first-hand reports in the *Militant* and *PM* will be an important contribution to the educational effort that is needed.

In addition, we are moving up the starting date of our fall campaign to sell 150,000 copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*—the circulation drive starts now!

Forums, meetings in union halls and communities, and teach-ins on campuses can all help spread the truth about the Nicaraguan revolution.

We appeal to readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, to unionists and students, to all those who support the right of the Nicaraguan people to determine their own destiny, to join in this historic solidarity campaign.

U.S. hands off Nicaragua!
For massive aid with no strings attached!

Stop the threats against Cuba!
Fair play for Nicaragua!

Help sell Militants

The big business news media is lying about Nicaragua to aid Washington's reactionary drive. Help spread the truth by selling the *Militant*.

Order a big supply. Bundles of five or more cost only 15 cents per copy.

We'll rush your order. Call or write: Militant Circulation Office, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014. Telephone: (212) 929-3486.

Young Socialist Alliance hails revolution

The following statement was issued by the Young Socialist Alliance National Executive Committee on August 13.

After forty-five years of suffering and exploitation under the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship, the Nicaraguan people are now on the road to freedom. And it was the Nicaraguan youth who led the fight in toppling the Somoza dynasty.

We pledge to make every effort to stop the U.S. government from intervening to drive back the revolution. And we demand that the U.S. rulers,

who have exploited the Nicaraguan workers and peasants for decades, provide all the material aid needed to rebuild the country.

American youth have been inspired by the Nicaraguan revolution. We have been inspired by the heroic role of the Sandinista youth in bringing down Somoza. And we have been inspired by the pledge of Nicaraguan students to help educate and provide health care for the masses of people.

The greatest danger to the Nicaraguan people today is the threat that the U.S. government—the mightiest

imperialist power—will intervene to stop the revolutionary process now going on in Nicaragua.

American youth of this country will be in the forefront of the campaign to defend the Nicaraguan revolution against the maneuvers of U.S. imperialism.

The Young Socialist Alliance will be campaigning in the factories, among our co-workers, to defend the revolution. And we will be educating and organizing on the campuses to halt the threats against Nicaragua.

The YSA has a long history of defending revolutionary struggles

against the reactionary acts of the U.S. rulers. One of our first campaigns was defending the Cuban revolution against the threats, blockade, and invasion by U.S. imperialism. We helped to mobilize support for Cuba and educated about the moves of the American government against it.

We believe that the Nicaraguan workers and peasants should determine for themselves how to run their country. And we will campaign to educate and mobilize the American public to see that the U.S. government keeps its hands off the Nicaraguan revolution!

Nicaraguan sugar workers

By Fred Murphy

CHICHIGALPA—The huge Ingenio San Antonio just east of here is the largest sugar mill in Central America and one of the biggest industrial sites in Nicaragua. The mill employs 4,000 permanent workers and up to 8,000 during the sugar harvest.

I visited the Ingenio San Antonio on August 5. Besides the mill itself, the site includes the workers' barracks-like housing, a hospital, a bank, a company store or commissary, and a National Guard post now under the control of the Sandinista army.

At the building that once housed the company-controlled "trade union," I found three leaders of the sugar workers—Silvio Ruiz, Juan Martínez and José Ramírez. They took me on a tour of the mill and explained how the Ingenio San Antonio became a key bastion in the Nicaraguan people's uprising against the Somoza dictatorship. They also told me how the sugar workers have begun to organize to defend their newly won gains.

The sugar workers, headed by a column of guerrillas from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) laid siege to the National Guard barracks at the mill on June 2. Somoza quickly sent in troop reinforcements and tanks. The air force began bombing the mill.

Much of the workers' housing was destroyed by the indiscriminate bombing, along with part of the hospital and some of the mill's valuable machinery. Some ninety civilians lost their lives, and about \$6 million worth of damage was done to the mill itself.

After three days of heavy fighting, the Sandinista column was forced to withdraw. The Guard then imposed a reign of terror. They searched the

workers' homes, robbed the bank, and sacked the commissary of food, liquor, and appliances.

Many workers and their families fled to Chichigalpa or to the surrounding countryside.

A stronger Sandinista force attacked the mill again on June 27. By July 1, the National Guard detachment was defeated and driven out.

The workers and the Sandinistas then turned the mill into a munitions factory.

"There is great potential here for making war matériel," Silvio Ruiz said. "We have laboratories, mechanical shops, and so on. So we were able to manufacture about 500 grenades and bombs, five cannons, two bazookas, and fifty fragmentation mines."

The Sandinistas organized the sugar workers into guerrilla units and dispatched them to the main Western Front battle zones in León and Chinandega.

A mechanics brigade was organized to repair Sandinista vehicles, and a unit of electricians helped keep power flowing in the areas that were under rebel control.

After Somoza fled and the dictatorship collapsed, the workers at the Ingenio San Antonio began holding meetings to decide what to do next.

On July 29, 2,000 workers gathered to discuss and approve a list of demands that would be presented to the mill's owner, Alfredo Pellas (a big landowner who belonged to the capitalist opposition to Somoza).

Representatives of the FSLN leadership visited the mill and spoke at the July 29 meeting. At their suggestion, the workers elected a Provisional Committee of forty-nine members—one



Leaders of workers committee at San Antonio sugar mill. From left: Silvio Ruiz, Juan Ma

delegate from each of the mill's departments.

The demands presented to Pellas called for repayment in full of all wages lost during June and July and the immediate resumption of production at the mill. The workers declared that if Pellas did not start up the mill, they would do so themselves.

The workers also demanded abolition of the "blacklist" they found in one of the mill's offices. Photographs of workers with X's drawn through them were accompanied by such labels as "dangerous" and "subversive." Some fifty of these worker militants

had been fired shortly before the insurrection, and another demand was that they be immediately reinstated.

Management personnel, who had all fled the mill when the insurrection began, returned at the beginning of August. They were confronted by a militant, well-organized, revolutionary-minded work force, one steeled in the battle against the dictatorship.

Pellas had no choice but to grant all the workers' demands—especially since the new government decreed August 2 that wages due to all Nicaraguan workers for the period of the

By Larry Seigle

Will the revolution in Nicaragua follow the path taken twenty years earlier by the Cuban workers and peasants? Will capitalism be overthrown? This question is on everyone's mind.

To understand what is going on in Nicaragua today, it is helpful to know what happened in Cuba after the July 26 Movement overthrew the Batista dictatorship.

The July 26 Movement in Cuba had begun as a petty-bourgeois formation with a radical democratic, anti-imperialist, and nationalist program. But what distinguished the Fidelistas from every previous radical petty-bourgeois formation in Cuba was that the Fidelistas meant what they said. Once in power, as they faced more and more intense pressure from Yankee imperialists and resistance from the Cuban capitalist class, they relied increasingly on mass mobilizations of the Cuban workers and peasants.

As Fidel put it in his speech on the twentieth anniversary of the revolution, "Before January [1959], a vanguard was the main protagonist in events; since that January, the main protagonist has been the people."

The Cuban workers and peasants were the only force in Cuba that could defeat the imperialists. And it was only by overthrowing capitalism and establishing a workers state that they could bring their full power to bear in the struggle against imperialism and for the economic and social advances the masses were demanding.

How did this come about?

Having learned the lessons of the 1954 CIA-organized coup against the Arbenz regime in Guatemala, the rebel leaders moved immediately after coming to power to disband the Batista army and police. They put some of the most notorious police torturers on trial, and executed some 600 of them with swift justice—although most of these butchers had escaped to Miami. The

public trials were used to educate and mobilize the masses.

It was this mass determination to establish revolutionary justice that provoked the initial howls of pain and hypocritical outrage from Washington about the "reign of terror" taking place in Cuba.

Coalition government

A coalition government was set up. While it included leaders of the July 26 Movement, the most important posts went to bourgeois figures. Castro took no post at first. Manuel Urrutia was named president. He had voted, as a judge, against the convictions of some of the rebel fighters who had been captured by Batista's police. José Miro Cardona, who was the president of the Havana Bar Association, was named prime minister.

This coalition government then proceeded to implement some of the measures that had been promised and fought for by the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army. Fissures within the government and within the July 26 Movement itself immediately began to appear.

The cutting edge of the revolution was the radical agrarian reform law adopted May 17, 1959. Prior to the revolution, 75 percent of the land had been owned by 8 percent of the population. Seven of the ten largest *latifundios* were American-owned, as was 40 percent of Cuban sugar production.

The agrarian reform law invoked the provisions of the 1940 constitution forbidding the holding of more than a thousand acres in a single property. Holdings beyond that were expropriated and distributed among the 700,000 landless peasants and agricultural workers, with priority to any tenants, sharecroppers, or squatters living on the land in question. Each family was guaranteed a minimum of sixty-six acres, free, with the right to buy another hundred acres, which could be passed on through inherit-

How Cubans wo



Volunteer team of sugar mill workers in Cuba during third harvest after Cuban revol

ance, but not sold. All cane land belonging to the giant sugar mills was expropriated, along with all land owned by non-Cubans. All land was to be compensated for by long-term government bonds.

Institute of Agrarian Reform

The National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) was established to oversee the implementation of the program, which provoked growing dismay and hostility in Washington and among the wealthy Cuban landowners. This in turn deepened the split

within the government.

INRA and the Rebel Army, backed by the workers and poor peasants, acted more and more as a "dual power" to the moderate elements in the government.

Other measures were implemented. Government corruption was wiped out. Home and apartment rents were reduced by 30 to 50 percent. Mortgage rates for small homeowners were lowered. Havana, which for decades had been used as a gambling den and brothel by the Yankees, was transformed.

'story



Mill'ant/Fred Murphy
162, a young friend, José Ramírez.

general strike and insurrection would have to be paid and that the government would make sure this was done.

"Things are not like they were before, under Somoza," Juan Martínez says. He is confident that the Ingenio San Antonio workers now have the power to back up their demands, and, if necessary, to take over the mill and run it themselves. "We are going to have a revolutionary union, and not a company union like before."

The workers also feel that the new, Sandinista-led government is on their side. They expect it to back them up in any new disputes with Pellas.

A history of U.S. domination

By Harry Ring

The victory of the Nicaraguan revolution brings to an end generations of U.S.-sponsored repression.

The struggle for independence has been long and bitter for the Nicaraguan people. Back in 1821, Nicaragua gained its independence from Spain, only to have British imperialism establish domination. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Washington helped Nicaragua oust the British—so that U.S. interests could move in.

In 1912, U.S. intervention was direct. The U.S. Marines were sent in to police the country. They remained until 1925.

In 1926 a rebellion began to develop among the Nicaraguan people. The Marines were sent back in to put it down. Washington won a "peace" agreement among the different Nicaraguan political factions.

Only one Nicaraguan leader refused to accept the U.S.-dictated agreement. General Augusto Cesar Sandino, a former oil-field mechanic and mine worker, said no. He recruited a fighting force to resist U.S. military domination.

Washington sent in 4,600 Marines to "pacify" the tiny, impoverished country. The war that followed was a preview of Vietnam. It included the first use of U.S. airplanes to bomb and strafe a Latin American people. The Marines were equipped with sophisticated weapons. The rebel forces fought for seven years with little more than the arms they were able to capture from the invaders.

But the Sandinistas enjoyed the support of the great majority of the people—the workers and landless peasants.

Among the ranks of the Nicaraguan army, forced to fight alongside the U.S. Marines, there were ten mutinies in seven years.

But the U.S. succeeded in developing the Nicaraguan National Guard, a well-trained and-equipped force of murderous repression. In its first years it was directly led by U.S. officers.

In 1933, Washington found a local candidate for the job of heading up the Guard: Anastasio Somoza García, father of the recently deposed tyrant. Somoza had once been a used-car salesman in Philadelphia. His principal qualifications for heading up the Guard were his fluency in English and his total subservience to U.S. policy.

In 1934 this U.S.-installed gangster arranged the treacherous murder of Sandino after Sandino accepted an invitation to negotiations.

In 1936 the elder Somoza had himself "elected" president. The dictator was a favorite of President Franklin Roosevelt, who once said, "Somoza may be a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch."

In 1956 Somoza García was assassinated, and, after a period, his son Luis assumed the bloody mantle. Later Luis's brother Anastasio took over, until the Nicaraguan people finally forced him to flee to Miami on July 17.

Nicaragua is a tiny country of only about 2.4 million people. U.S. business interests do not have huge investments there. Exxon has a refinery and U.S. banks hold loans totalling more than \$1 billion. The late Howard Hughes held a 25 percent interest in the Somoza-controlled national airline. Other

U.S. companies have various commercial and agricultural holdings.

Despite this relatively small financial stake, Washington has—from the outset of its imperialist expansion—seen Nicaragua as a linchpin in the structure of its control of Central America.

The Somoza dynasty proved totally reliable. In 1954 Nicaragua was the staging ground for the CIA-organized overthrow of a reform government in Guatemala. And in 1961 Nicaraguan camps were used to train counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles for Washington's ill-fated invasion of Cuba.

In return for their services to Washington, the Somozas were permitted to steal Nicaragua blind. When Somoza split for Miami he was reputed to be worth more than half a billion dollars. The Somoza family owned vast areas of land, cattle, a fishing fleet, the only airline, TV and radio stations, a newspaper, and much more.

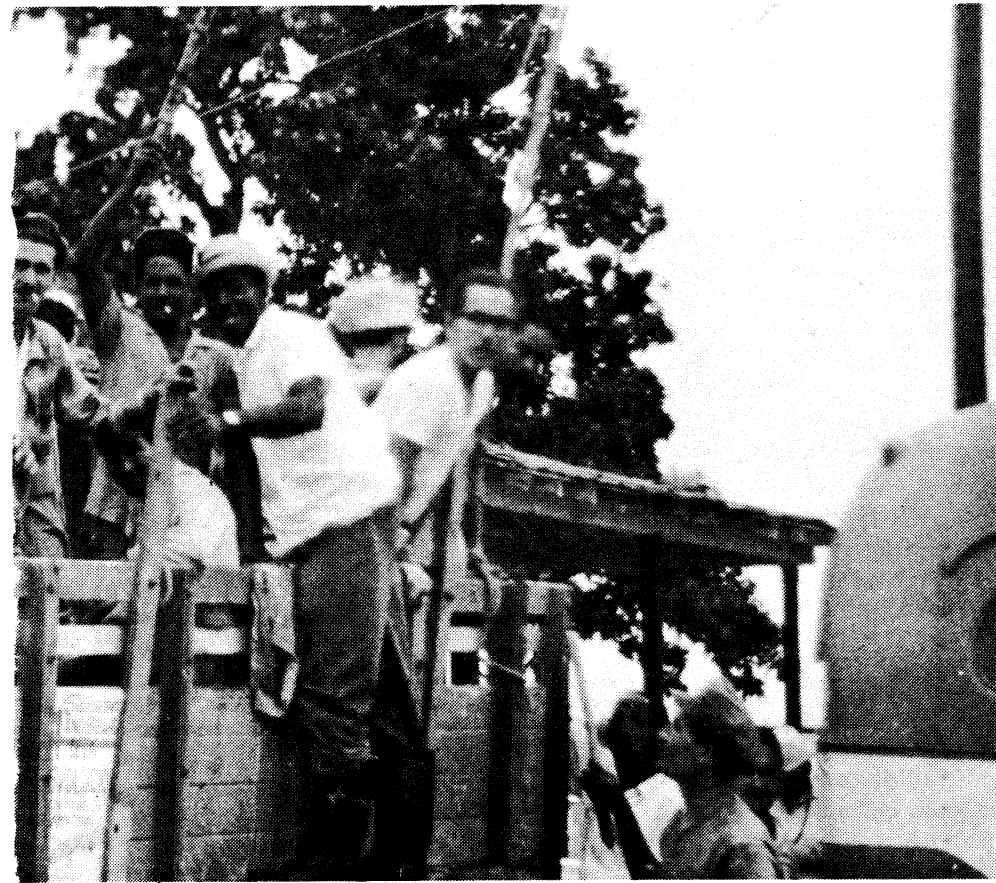
The suffering of the Nicaraguan people has been in direct proportion. The people are impoverished. An estimated 60 percent are unable to read and write.

The absence of medical care was a scandal, with the resulting widespread disease and high infant mortality rate.

Today Washington watches, enraged, as the Nicaraguan people take over the big sector of the national economy that had fallen into Somoza's hands and begin to use those resources for the benefit of the people.

We can only say, it couldn't have happened to a more deserving gang of butchers—and their sponsors.

n their freedom



PH.

The private homes and clubs of the wealthy who had fled were confiscated and turned into schools and dormitories. Taxes were reduced by two-thirds for most citizens, while those who had previously evaded all taxes found themselves pursued by zealous collectors correcting years of fraudulent tax evasion.

Gas, electricity, and telephone rates were reduced after committees of workers opened the books of the giant American-owned utilities and documented the criminal price gouging.

Currency and import controls were introduced.

As fissures within the July 26 Movement and the coalition government deepened, the Fidelistas moved further and further to the left, relying more and more on massive revolutionary mobilizations in the cities as well as the countryside. In turn, the Castro leadership itself was further transformed as it more and more reflected and responded to the deepening radicalization of the toiling masses of Cuba. The masses entered directly into the political process, initiating factory

"interventions," putting their stamp of approval on, and consolidating, the revolutionary measures taken.

One by one the bourgeois ministers resigned from their posts. Huge mass mobilizations played a decisive role in driving key bourgeois forces out of top posts, and in strengthening the Fidelista forces. In February, Miro Cardona stepped down and Castro became Prime Minister. In July, Urrutia was replaced by Osvaldo Dorticos as President. By November 1959, when Che Guevara became head of the national bank, almost all of the remaining bourgeois figures had been removed from the government.

Workers & farmers gov't

It was clear by then that a point of qualitative change in the nature of the government had occurred, and a workers and farmers government was in the saddle.

Among the most significant steps taken by this government was the organization of a workers and peasants militia.

But the dominant property relations remained bourgeois. The capitalist class had not yet been expropriated. It still hung on to positions of power in the economy, from which it could work to regain the initiative and use its power to roll back the gains of the revolutionary upsurge. In other words, Cuba was not yet a workers state.

In July of 1960 Joseph Hansen, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote: "What has been established is a highly contradictory and highly unstable regime, subject to pressures and impulses that can move it forward or backward." There remained the contradiction between the workers and farmers government and the economic power of the native capitalists and their imperialist senior partners. What was needed was "to carry the revolution forward to its culmination by toppling bourgeois economic and social relations . . ." (*Dynamics of the Cuban*

Revolution, p. 67., Pathfinder Press, Inc.)

This was the key challenge. And it was met decisively by the Castro leadership. Facing the escalating threats and offensive moves by Washington, the Castro government itself initiated the next steps and mobilized the Cuban workers to carry them through. They used the governmental power to organize and lead the masses in expropriating the bourgeoisie and opening the door to a planned economy, thus bringing about a revolutionary transformation of the class character of the state.

The nature of this revolutionary government can be seen from the way it responded to the major moves of the imperialists.

Imperialist campaign

Following the promulgation of the first agrarian reform law, the imperialists escalated their preparation for a counterrevolutionary offensive. They charged that there had been a "Red" takeover in Havana. They began to complain that there were no free elections, although they had never complained about the lack of free elections under Batista.

They waxed indignant over the provisions for compensation in the agrarian reform law, which, they whined, weren't fair because the value of the land was assessed at the value listed for tax purposes by the landowners under the Batista regime!

The White House grumbled that nothing was working the way it ought to; the new officials in the government wouldn't even take bribes. The imperialists denounced Fidel as a demagogue because he talked on television for so long. Of course, they never reported on the content of what he said.

A campaign was launched in Congress and in the capitalist press to cut Cuba's sugar quota. In January 1960,

Continued on page 15

Text of July 26 speech

Fidel Castro urges world solidarity, aid to Nicaragua

Heroic Sandinista Fighters; (Applause)
Comrades of the Party and Government Leadership; (Applause)
People of Holguín; (Applause)
Compatriots: (Applause)

Two weeks ago we thought that in this rally various topics would be discussed, among them the successes and the merits of this province; the enormous transformation to be seen throughout the province and the city; its tremendous march forward and its progress, its new buildings, its new factories, its work spirit, its production successes.

The great merit of having produced 764,000 tons of sugar in this year's harvest: (Applause) 150,000 tons more than last year, bringing this year's national sugar production to 7,992,000 tons, 96 base (Applause) only 8,000 tons short of the eight million mark (Applause) and surpassing last year's production figure by more than half a million tons. (Applause) And all this under adverse weather conditions and working the sugar mills right up until yesterday, which was when the last one stopped.

This is what we were thinking. But when we learned less than 48 hours ago that our people were to receive an extraordinary honor, that a large contingent of fighters, of heroic and self-sacrificing leaders, leaders of the sister people of Nicaragua, wished to be with us on this July 26, (Applause) I realized that today's rally would inevitably turn into a Sandinista rally. (Applause and shouts of "Cuba, Nicaragua, United Will Win!")

What should we talk about, what else could we talk about, what more extraordinary event of our times, what act of greater historical importance, of greater significance and implications has taken place in recent times than the victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua? What has touched us more deeply, what has captured our attention more during these weeks, what could have excited or inspired us more than this popular and heroic victory?

What greater honor?

And what greater honor could we have received, what greater splendor for this revolutionary day of ours, what greater honor for this city and this province than the warm, fraternal visit of solidarity from this contingent of heroic, valiant, intelligent and capable commanders and fighters of the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua? (Applause)

I say solidarity, because we too need solidarity; I say stimulating, because we also need that stimulation. Solidarity, stimulation, because for a long time it was almost a crime to visit Cuba; for a long time imperialism tried to cut the ties with our sister peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, and for a long time blockaded us, prohibited and thwarted the coming together and development of the natural, historical and logical ties between the Nicaraguan and the Cuban peoples.

For so many years we have remembered and mourned those brothers of ours who died fighting at Playa Girón, because of the invasion that left precisely from Nicaraguan territory, in one of the most infamous services which the tyrant offered imperialism, given that this same Somoza—now but a shadow of his former self—was the head of the General Staff of the Nicaraguan army at the time of

Jubilant Cubans hail Sandinistas

By José G. Pérez

HOLGUÍN, Cuba—The overthrow of the hated Somoza dictatorship electrified all of Cuba. For days before his downfall, the Cuban press had been filled with reports of the fighting. The situation in Nicaragua was the number one topic of discussion everywhere on the island.

When news came of the crushing of the last pockets of Somocista resistance, jubilation spread throughout the island. As one former commander of the Cuban Rebel Army told me, "You have to understand, we have been waiting twenty years for this."

Nowhere was this jubilation expressed as enthusiastically as at the July 26 rally held here in commemoration of the 1953 attack on the Moncada Barracks. The rally was attended by twenty-six commanders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) as well as by representatives of the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua.

I attended the rally as part of the Second Contingent "Carlos Muñiz Varela" of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. The brigade is a group of young Cubans living in the United States and other countries who oppose the U.S. government's hostile policy toward the Cuban revolution.

It was shortly before 6 p.m., after virtually all of the dignitaries and rally participants had arrived, that the first Sandinista commanders made their way onto the platform. A huge roar went up from the crowd of 20,000 as the Sandinistas raised their weapons in greetings to the rally.

The uproar still had not died down several minutes later when Fidel Castro emerged on the platform. Pandemonium broke out as Fidel embraced the Nicaraguan heroes, and started to rearrange the seating of the more than one hundred dignitaries on the platform.

He took a large section of the front row and seated there the several women Sandinista com-

manders present, surrounding them with the rest of the Nicaraguan delegation.

Meanwhile the crowd repeatedly shouted, "Nicaragua, Nicaragua, Nicaragua!" and Cuba and Nicaragua united will win!"

The chants were started on the speakers platform and were led by Raúl Castro, minister of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces.

No sooner had the shouting died down than it again broke out as the announcer introduced the different members of the Sandinista delegation. The strongest cheers were for the women commanders.

The first three speakers all were Nicaraguans: Alfonso Robelo, a member of the Government of National Reconstruction, and FSLN commanders Humberto Ortega and Bayardo Arce.

In his talk, Robelo described the ruins in which the Somocista tyranny had left the country, appealing to all countries of the Americas to aid Nicaragua in rebuilding the country, especially in the fields of health and education.

Ortega described the FSLN's twenty-year struggle to overthrow Somoza and appealed for solidarity against any imperialist attack against the Sandinista revolution. Arce presented Fidel Castro with an Israeli-made machine gun captured from Somoza's forces "to show our admiration and appreciation for the Cuban people's solidarity."

Castro was the final speaker. His speech, like those of the Nicaraguans, was repeatedly interrupted with cheering, applause, and chanting. But the high point came toward the end of his speech, when Fidel proposed Cuba send Nicaragua all the doctors and teachers it asked for, as well as help "in any other field," to which the rally participants responded with repeated, thunderous ovations.

Following is the text of Castro's address to the Cuba-Nicaragua solidarity rally held July 26 in Holguín. The English text is from the August 5, 1979 issue of *Granma Weekly Review*.

Girón, when the B-26 bombers left from there to bomb our homes, to kill peasant families, women and children, to drop tons of bombs on our militia and soldiers.

How can we fail to see in this gesture of the Sandinistas, in this spontaneous gesture. . . . Because it was not our initiative, since we know the tremendous amount of work they have at this moment, the enormous job they have to do, the great need for their presence in the country, especially in these early days. We would not have been able to ask them for this honor, this immense, infinite honor that came entirely from them. (Prolonged applause)

This is proof of the political valor of Sandinism, proof of revolutionary valor, because we know this world of ours and we know that political and revolutionary valor do not always abound.

They were not prejudiced, they were not afraid. They didn't have to ask anyone for permission to

come to Cuba. They did not have to explain themselves to anyone, nor worry about what anyone would think. (Applause)

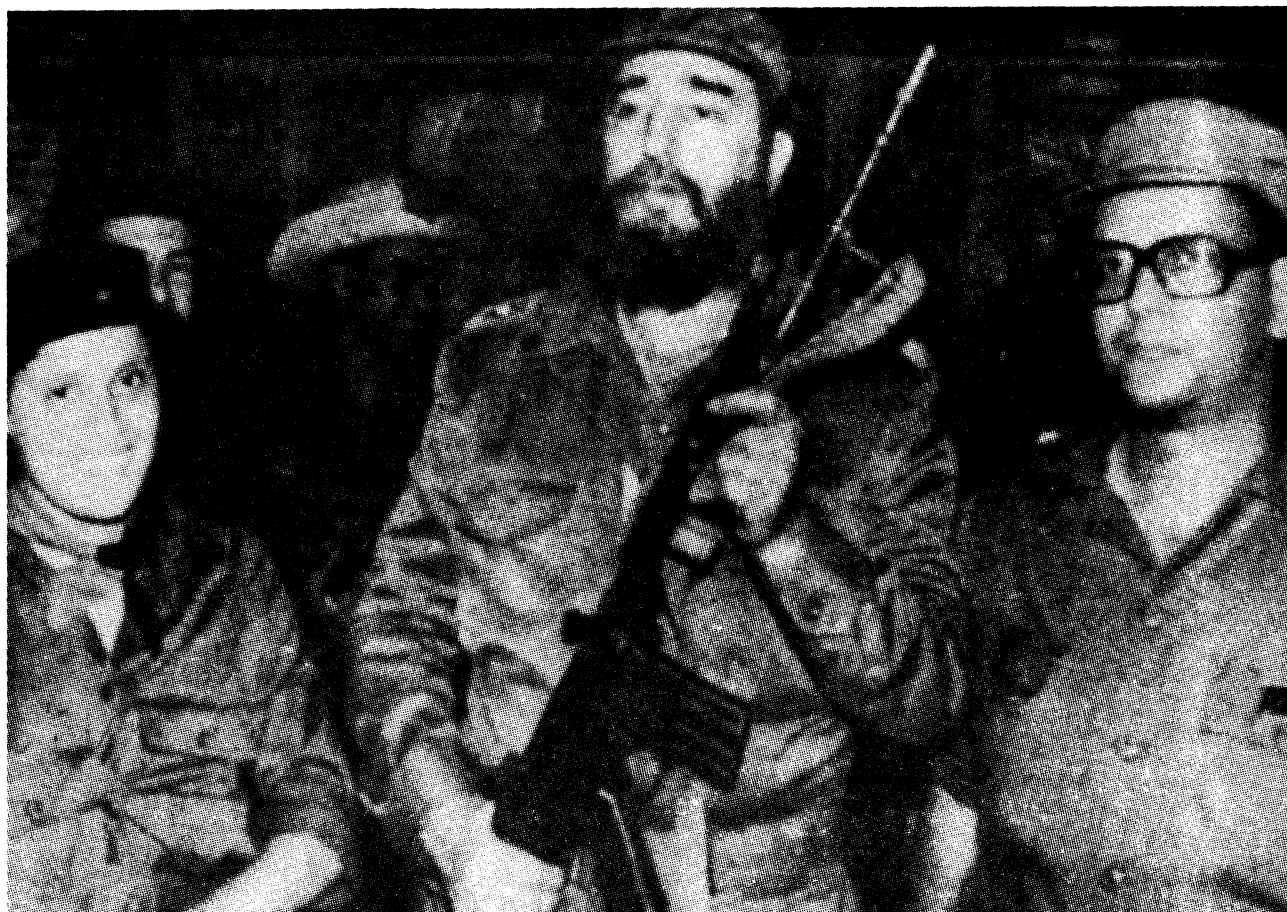
Political honesty

This is proof of political honesty, because they don't go about pretending; they don't go about denying that they are friends of Cuba, that they feel respect for Cuba, that they are in solidarity with Cuba. They are open, they don't harbor fears.

For this reason, I believe that they inspire confidence not only in our people but in all peoples and in world political opinion. They are not prejudiced, in spite of the gossip, the intrigues, the fact that now the campaigns will begin, that now the accusations will begin, once the victory honeymoon has ended.

They do not harbor prejudices, because they are not afraid of the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions being confused, because they are way beyond those prejudices.

Nicaraguan liberation fighters presented Castro with Israeli machine gun captured from Somoza's National Guard



Yet they themselves will by no means say that the two revolutions are exactly alike. (Applause) They are both profound revolutions, alike in many ways and in many ways different, as all true revolutions must be. (Applause)

'Every country has own road'

This is important for our people, important also for world opinion. Every country has its own road, its own problems, its own style, methods, objectives. We have our own; they have theirs. We did things one way, our way; they will do things their way. Similarities; they achieved victory by means similar to ours; we both achieved victory by the only means by which we could free ourselves from imperialist tyranny and domination: gun in hand, (Applause) fighting fiercely, heroically.

And we should say, we should stress, that the Nicaraguan Revolution was noted for its heroism, for its perseverance, for the tenacity of its fighters, because it is not the victory of one day; it is the victory of 20 years of struggle, 20 years of struggle! (Applause)

Because in the same year that our Revolution triumphed, there were already groups of fighters led by that extraordinary and marvelous fighter Carlos Fonseca Amador, follower of Sandino (Applause) and founder of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the people's guide in those terrible days when victory was so far away, leader fallen in the struggle, as so many fell in our own land; like Martí, Maceo, Agramonte; like Abel and Frank País from our generation, who fell without being able to see the victory but certain that victory would be achieved!

Young fighters

The young fighters took up Fonseca's struggle. Yes, it was said that the average age of the fighters was 20 years; but the leaders, what's their average age? Some of the oldest are in their thirties—those who began to fight when they were only 15, 16, 17 years old, and who faced the difficulties and obsta-

cles for 20 years. Twenty years to gather the fruits of the seed sown, cultivated and irrigated with blood for such a long time, to achieve victory in the midst of a truly popular epic.

Who among us has not seen at the movies, on television, in books and magazines pictures of the incredibly brutal repression, the ruthless, genocidal, unscrupulous war unleashed against the people of Nicaragua by the Somoza dictatorship?

Who has not seen pictures of mothers weeping for their children, for their loved ones; pictures of children crying for their parents, of homes that have been destroyed, of piles of corpses, of torture, murders, bombings of the cities?

Where else has such barbarism been seen? Where else has there been an air force dedicated to dropping tons and tons of bombs on the cities of its own country? On Managua, Masaya, León, Estelí, on this group of martyred cities.

They did not hesitate to give orders to drop 500-pound bombs on populated and even overpopulated areas, acts that really filled the world with anger and amazement and that, in their own way, contributed to creating the huge campaign and the unshakable feeling of solidarity with the Nicaraguan people and the Sandinista fighters.

These are the fruits of imperialist intervention in Nicaragua. These were the fruits of intervention, the bitter fruits of imperialist policy in our hemisphere. Because they were the ones who shaped, aided and abetted those sanguinary, repressive, reactionary, tyrannical, fascist regimes in this hemisphere.

And it is said, it has been said—and I think even Somoza himself said it—that in the United Nations the government of Somoza never once failed to vote with the Government of the United States.

Throughout the world, U.S. policy was to create this type of political regime, throughout the entire world! Not only in our America, but in each and every continent!

As for the bombings, we see similar cases: the bombings of the Namibian camps by the racist

South Africans, the Rhodesian racists' bombings of the refugee camps of the people of Zimbabwe, using the most modern planes, the most deadly weapons, sophisticated bombs that spread thousands of pellets that are often not even made of steel, but of rubber, so that surgeons can't spot them in X-rays.

Examples of this kind are the genocidal acts perpetrated against the Palestinian people in the Middle East, the constant bombings against the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, against Lebanese communities in Lebanon, bombed practically every day by Israeli planes, symbols of crime.

But it was not only the Israeli bombs falling on the Palestinians, the Lebanese, the imperialist bombs falling on the Namibians and the Zimbabweans; it was also the imperialist bombs, Israeli bombs falling on the Nicaraguans.

Israeli-U.S. conspiracy

When the imperialists wanted to pretend that they were not furnishing arms, they furnished them through their allies. And who is going to believe that the Israeli state would have sent Somoza those arms, those Galil guns, those bombs, those planes without the consent of and approval of the Government of the United States? And with those bombs and guns tens of thousands of people in that country were murdered; we were told that 40,000 people died, that is to say, twice the number of people attending the rally this afternoon.

These are the fruits of the conspiracy that led to the cowardly murder of Sandino, to the implantation of that disgraceful regime that governed the country for almost 50 years and has disappeared thanks to the heroic struggle of the Nicaraguan people and the Sandinista fighters.

From now on, the people of Nicaragua will also be able to meet together as we have done since our Revolution; I also think that one day, in squares such as this one, the portraits and images of the heroes mentioned here by Commander Humberto Ortega will appear alongside the people, ennobling and dignifying revolutionary rallies, and depicted there will undoubtedly be Sandino, Fonseca and all the patriots that over 150 years—as has been said here—fought for the independence of Nicaragua. (Applause)

150 years of domination

The Sandinista victory is not only a victory over 45 years of Somoza-ism; it is a victory over 150 years of foreign domination in the country, (Applause) it is a victory over many centuries of conquest, exploitation and foreign domination. If anything is certain it is that for the first time, for the first time in all their history, the Nicaraguan people became completely free and independent on July 19th, when the columns of hardened Sandinista forces entered Managua, (Applause) because our peoples—and especially Central America, which became a hunting ground for pirates, filibusters and interventionists—passed from Spanish to Yankee domination.

So that day not only marks the day of the victory of the Revolution, but also of the triumph of Nicaraguan independence, (Applause) two great and important historical objectives achieved in one battle. It is in this that we see the importance and the

Continued on next page



Nicaraguan people celebrated with victory march in Managua August 3.

Militant/Fred Murphy

Continued from preceding page

significance of the victorious conclusion of the struggle led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

International solidarity

But this Sandinista victory, this struggle, means even more. A great degree of international solidarity developed around this struggle, and a great degree of unity in all the Central American and Latin American left; around the Sandinista struggle what we could call a great democratic, pro-independence and anti-interventionist front developed tacitly in Latin America, something of historic significance and enormous importance.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, in this hemisphere, the Sandinista movement encouraged the pro-independence and anti-interventionist feelings of Latin American peoples. This reached its high point, its moment of culmination, at the last meeting of the Organization of American States. Let's refer to this Organization for the first time without adding any epithets, because for the first time, for the first time, there was outright insubordination on the part of the Latin American states.

This is very symptomatic, since the most reactionary and aggressive sectors in the United States advised the present U.S. administration to pursue a policy of intervention in Nicaragua, and at this meeting the United States advocated an Inter-American Peace-Keeping Force, supposedly to bring peace to Nicaragua, when peace in Nicaragua, the peace imposed by imperialism since it began its many interventions and set up that reactionary regime was the peace of the grave. In reality this was the kind of peace they wanted to continue upholding in order to prevent revolutionary peace, to prevent the Sandinista victory, to deprive the people of their victory.

We know what these Inter-American Peace-Keeping Forces amount to, who supplies the weapons, who leads them, who supplies them and who makes up their forces. We have seen these so-called Inter-American forces more than once before.

The imperialist aim was really a sinister one: it was to intervene in Nicaragua. The imperialists were used to having all the Latin American governments say, "Yes!" but this time a sufficient number of Latin American governments said, "No!" (Applause)

And, as always, the pretexts were very noble: "to bring peace to the suffering people of Nicaragua." They did not want this moment to come, they did not want the 19th of July to come. A month later the Sandinistas brought real peace, the peace of a happy and victorious people; a people that had suffered to the full, true, but a people that was also full of hope and optimism in the future.

We, our people, cannot help but note the full magnitude and significance of this historic event: the defeat of the U.S. interventionist scheme in the heart of the Latin American states. There was a majority which resolutely opposed intervention and defended the principle of non-intervention, of sovereignty, of absolute respect for the sovereignty of our peoples, as something sacred.

It must be said that the U.S. proposal was isolated. In the end they adopted an intelligent position. If they had voted in favor of their own proposal, that is, in favor of the proposal for intervention, they would have ended up in the company of Paraguay and Somoza, because the only one who advocated intervention, who openly voted for intervention, was Somoza, and I think Paraguay as well.

Of course, intervention was in Somoza's interest, for the time being at least. Such a course would have preserved the National Guard and would have preserved his interests, along with those of the monopolies. If the United States had abstained, it would have found itself together with Chile, Uruguay, El Salvador and Guatemala, and they did not think it was very honorable to be seen in that kind of company. And so they too voted with the majority. An interesting phenomenon.

A great victory

In our opinion the decision, the result of the meeting constituted a great victory for the people of our America and it helped develop the spirit of solidarity with Nicaragua. And in the position maintained at the OAS, we must stress the role of Panama, Costa Rica, Venezuela and the other Andean Pact countries, (Applause) and that of Mexico, Jamaica, Grenada and others. (Applause) In the creation of this democratic, anti-interventionist front which has formed, we must mention the names of people as well as countries: the names of Torrijos, (Applause) Carazo, (Applause) López Portillo, (Applause) Manley (Applause) and Bishop. (Applause) And it is also only fair to recall the name of a person who, though he is



Sandinistas greeted in Cuba. 'They didn't have to ask anyone for permission to come. They did not have to explain themselves to anyone.'

no longer president of his country, contributed a great deal to the development of this solidarity with the Sandinista struggle: the former president of Venezuela, Carlos Andrés Pérez. (Applause)

And let me stress that there was not a single party or organization of the left in Latin America that did not express its willingness to struggle; not a single one failed to express its solidarity with the struggle of the Sandinista people. (Applause)

It is very important for all the peoples still suffering from fascism and the bloodiest tyrannies that this climate, this front and this spirit should be maintained. This is a duty—in our opinion—of the Sandinistas as well; it will be their contribution, the contribution of the victorious people of Nicaragua, toward maintaining that spirit and that broad front.

Many questions are now being raised, and there are many people wanting to establish similarities between what happened in Cuba and what has happened in Nicaragua.

Pretexts for aggression

Some of these questions are not being posed in good faith, inspired by the wish to start creating justifications and seeking pretexts to apply aggressive measures against the people of Nicaragua as well, blockades against the people of Nicaragua, aggression against the people of Nicaragua—all those filthy measures and all those crimes they committed against us—and we must be careful about this.

The Nicaraguans have given a magnificent answer for those people with this sort of aim in mind who have made assertions or expressed fears to the effect that Nicaragua would become a new Cuba. The Nicaraguans have replied: No, Nicaragua will become a new Nicaragua! (Applause) And this is something quite different.

They do not see themselves in us, as if they were looking in a mirror. Rather, it is we who today see ourselves mirrored in them, because nothing reminds us more of our own struggles, our sacrifices and our own image in those early days of the Revolution.

'No two Revolutions the same'

There are no two revolutions the same. There can't be. There are many similarities—as I said—as to spirit, heroism, combat. But our problems are not exactly the same as their problems; the conditions under which our Revolution took place are not exactly the same as the conditions under which their Revolution is taking place, including the fact that in our case this front I mentioned did not exist and that the imperialists launched their campaigns and their aggressions immediately.

The imperialists knew less then, and now even the imperialists have managed to learn something. Not much, but something.

The conditions under which their struggle was fought, its characteristics, were different. For instance, the unity of the entire people, which was an essential condition for victory, the participation of all social strata, the organization of various popular movements, which joined ranks, reaching certain compromises, creating certain circumstances that differed from ours. In other words, in Nicaragua and Cuba things are not going to be exactly the same, quite the contrary.

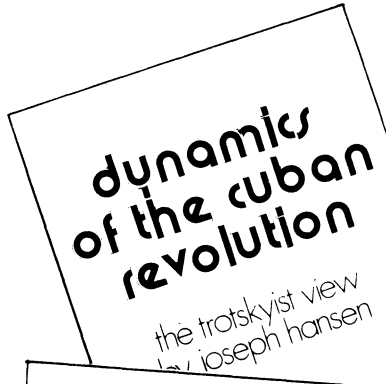
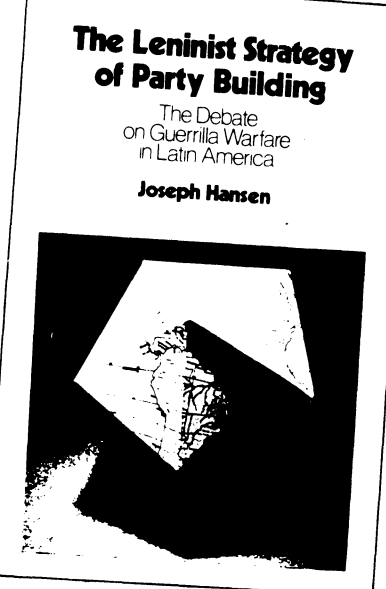
Some of the characteristics we have noted in our Nicaraguan revolutionary comrades are worthy of mention. Firstly, the people's militant spirit, their heroism, their bravery. They have distinguished themselves as great fighters, but they have also distinguished themselves as great political tacticians and strategists. They have displayed great wisdom, great ability to unite, great ability to act in difficult, complex circumstances.

Military and political strategy

They fought heroically, but they have also been able to be flexible and when they needed to negotiate in a certain way to avoid the risks of intervention, they were not afraid to negotiate. And they showed great ability, great talent both in military and political strategy. Needless to say, had it been otherwise their victory would have been inexplicable.

Even during the final stage, when the Somoza regime was in its death throes, they discussed how the end would be, the graveside protocol, as it were, Somoza's funeral. Several countries took part in these talks, the Government of National Reconstruction took part, the Sandinista leadership took part and even the United States took part.

And as *Granma* briefly explained, Somoza's

Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution	paper, \$5.45
The Leninist Strategy of Party Building	paper, \$7.95
Add 75 cents for postage	
Pathfinder Press	
410 West Street, New York, New York 10014	

demise was supposed to occur at four in the morning; then somebody called Urcuyo—at first I found it hard to remember the name, even now I do not remember it very well, and I daresay in a couple of weeks I will have forgotten it again (Laughter and applause)—then somebody called Urcuyo was supposed to take over at eight in the morning and finally hand over to the Board of National Reconstruction at one in the afternoon. In the interim period I believe that someone was to be appointed head of the National Guard, something like that.

The Sandinistas made some concessions. And it was wise of them to make these concessions, those they thought they should make. At the same time they were firm and did not make concessions they should not have made.

It was assumed, of course, that there would be a new army. The country could not remain in the hands of those genocidal maniacs. Basically, the new army would be made up of the Sandinista fighters and, it is said, also some National Guard members who were not guilty of corruption, repression and crimes.

Now, this may be all right in principle, in theory, but it is hard to imagine there could be even one of them who was not guilty of corruption, repression and crimes. However the Sandinista attitude was a generous one.

We were too, in our own struggle. We repeatedly appealed to the army. At the end we even held talks with them, and they said to us: "We've lost the war, how do we bring it to an end?"

We gave them our opinion on how to proceed. We told them that the forces in Santiago should surrender and that they should neither discuss things with the U.S. embassy, nor stage a coup d'etat in the capital, nor help Batista escape. And so we came to an agreement. We waited for the 31st (of December, 1958) and we did not attack the Santiago garrison, waiting for the agreement to be honored.

But they did the exact opposite; they staged a coup in Havana, they came to an agreement with the U.S. embassy, and they saw Batista off at the airport. So that was the end of the agreement and we had no choice but to disarm the army, which we did in 48 hours, as you all know perfectly well, so there is no need to repeat it here.

Well, something similar happened in Nicaragua; when this Urcuyo character had been appointed president, he said no, he intended to stay there until 1981. (Laughter) So the Sandinistas gave the order to attack, and in less than 72 hours they disarmed the National Guard, and now there is no National Guard. (Applause) It turned out that the U.S. Government could not even honor its own part in the agreements.

Nonetheless, the Government of National Reconstruction and the Sandinista leadership have done a very correct thing, in our opinion, in maintaining the generous attitude they displayed in these talks. Of course, the U.S. Government was not concerned about the tens of thousands of people killed by the bombings; but they were very concerned about the lives of Somoza's thugs, his poor little thugs. But the magnanimity and generosity displayed by the Sandinistas has been extraordinary, exemplary, exemplary!

Needless to say all this was just to pave the way for launching a campaign against the Sandinista movement, which has won so much solidarity and sympathy all over the world.

And so the Sandinistas have not only been heroic and efficient in war and flexible in politics; they have also been extraordinarily magnanimous in victory! I am sure that this will earn the broadest sympathy and will strengthen feelings of solidarity throughout the world. It will deprive the reactionaries of arguments, it will deprive them of weapons, it will deprive them of fuel for slander and defamation.

It also shows the enormous influence the Sandinista commanders and the Government of National Reconstruction have over the masses, because the masses have not forgotten—nor will they ever forget—the crimes, torture and bombings. They will not forget. But they have also given proof of their great trust in the leadership by holding back when it was necessary for them to hold back.

Imperialist intervention

We hope that in Nicaragua's case the imperialists will not repeat their interventionist ventures or try fostering counterrevolution. Of course, we are not going to deceive ourselves. We're not going to imagine that the reactionaries will leave the Nicaraguan Revolution in peace, despite its magnanimity, generous attitude and democratic aims.

They have said that if an election is needed it's fine with them to have an election. In any election held in Nicaragua, no matter how many resources are supplied to the reactionary bands, the Sandinistas will win with an enormous majority. (Applause)



Cuban schoolchildren. 'Only a revolutionary government can carry out a great health and education campaign.'

In any kind of election, under any kind of Constitution that allows a citizen the right to vote and the citizen does vote, the Sandinistas would win. (Applause)

This is why—and this is what I'm explaining to our people—it's the circumstances in which the Nicaraguan victory was won that determine that the ways they adopt be different from ours. Furthermore, the fact that right now Nicaragua is in ruins, completely destroyed, calls for a national reconstruction program with the participation of every sector of Nicaraguan society.

'Realists make best revolutions'

The Sandinistas are revolutionaries. We don't deny it, nobody denies it, they don't deny it. But they are not extremists, they are realists. And it is realists who make the best revolutions, (Applause) the best and most profound revolutions.

I predict that they will go far because they are taking their time, because they're not extremists, because they're taking things slowly. They know what to aim for at each stage of a political and revolutionary process and the means that correspond to these aims. I'm sure of that.

They used their heads, too, the Sandinistas, because they closed ranks at just the right moment and the result was victory, fruit of the wisdom with which they acted. And our greatest hope is that this unity becomes ever more solid and closer as an essential requisite for the future. The people, weapons, unity. That's all they need to go as far as they want for as long as they want.

They are now faced with a tremendous job, tremendous, much worse than the one that faced us when we won; because our war, and the development of the columns and the guerrilla fronts, was different. They combined the development of the columns and the guerrilla fronts with insurrection in the cities, an infallible system that neither Somoza nor the National Guard could beat.

Destruction of cities

The enemy had no qualms at all in shelling and bombing the rebellious cities with every available weapon, mercilessly destroying entire cities and facilities of all kinds and leaving behind an enormous wake of destruction, the country's finances bankrupt with not a single reserve left.

Engineer Alfonso Robelo was telling me that there were some three million left in the treasury, with an immediate debt of 250 million and an overall foreign debt of 1,200 million dollars. There wasn't a single cent left. Such that one of the first things they had to do was nationalize the banks, among other things, as a measure to protect depositors from ruin, because the banks were bankrupt and nobody could guarantee the savings held in them.

So that's one of the first measures they've had to take. There's much hunger in Nicaragua. I believe that Nicaragua needs help from everybody. In the past few weeks, a large number of leaders have expressed their readiness to help Nicaragua.

I think that's very good.

Governments of different hues, of different ideologies, of different political systems have expressed their readiness to assist the people of Nicaragua on a large scale. And Nicaragua certainly needs this help.

Even the United States has stated that it's ready to send food and organize other kinds of help. We're glad to hear it. They said they were going to start an airlift and send 300 tons of food a day. We think that's a very good idea.

Martí said that heaven wanted tyrants to be wise only once. Needless to say, Somoza wasn't wise even once; the Government of the United States, however, has been wise at least on this one occasion, because it's much better in every sense, more productive, and makes for better relations among the peoples and for a climate of peace all over the world, to send food instead of sending bombs and Marines, like they did in Vietnam and so many other places.

'A gigantic Vietnam'

Naturally—since I mentioned Vietnam—if the United States had intervened in Nicaragua it would have been an act of suicide for United States' policy in this hemisphere, because we haven't the slightest doubt that the Sandinistas would have continued fighting in spite of U.S. intervention. There's no question about that.

We're extremely happy that it didn't happen—who knows how many lives have been spared for that very reason—but we are also convinced that had there been an intervention it would have met with tremendous resistance on the part of Sandino's people. And not only that, but also that a gigantic Vietnam might have developed throughout Central America and in the rest of Latin America, a gigantic Vietnam. (Applause)

Intervention would have been an act of sheer stupidity, but also an act that would have meant a great deal of bloodshed for our peoples.

So an intervention in Nicaragua wouldn't have gone unpunished, of course—we must be quite clear about that—but we are glad that the firm struggle waged by the people of Nicaragua, international solidarity, the support given by the Latin American peoples and the realism and flexibility of the Sandinistas prevented the perpetration of one of the most mistaken acts imaginable, and which was a real possibility.

We are glad to know the United States is sending food to Nicaragua. We are glad to know that everybody is sending food and giving aid of all kinds to the people of Nicaragua.

We are not rich; we cannot compete with the United States in numbers of planes and tons of food. But we will send something, because even though we are poor we can always spare some of what we have. (Applause)

And something very important: we may not have great financial or material resources, but we do have human resources. (Applause)

Engineer Robelo said here that they need doctors, that they need campaigns to wipe out illiteracy. And we know our doctors and teachers. (Applause) They'll go wherever they're needed. If they have to go to the mountains, they go to the mountains; if to the countryside, the countryside. In Cuba and in Ethiopia, in Vietnam, in Yemen, in Angola, anywhere.

Nicaragua is much nearer, right nearby. There's practically the same distance between Cape San Antonio and Managua as between Cape San Antonio and Maisi Point. So it's really close.

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page

Therefore, I believe that we are expressing the feelings of our Party and of our people when we say to our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters that, if they plan to put into effect a broad health and medical care program and there aren't enough Nicaraguan doctors, we are ready to send all the doctors they need to support this health program. (Applause)

Of course, we do have more than 1,000 doctors working abroad, but we still have some to spare. We have our commitments and we can meet them.

How would we be able to do it? By asking our hospitals and our doctors for their collaboration. We have done it on other occasions, for example, in the matter of time off following guard duty. We've said wait for the future, a splendid future because some 4,000 students are already entering medical school every year and we are building medical schools in practically every province. We would need the collaboration of the hospitals, People's Power, the public health sector and especially the doctors themselves, to cover the work of those who go.

We've already sent the first medical brigade of 60 people, 40 of them doctors. It was done quickly, in a matter of hours. (Applause)

We sent a large medical brigade when Nicaragua was hit by an earthquake, even though Somoza was still there. And I remember that the colonel they mentioned today, who wasn't yet a colonel at the time, that son of Somoza's who they say was the head of the EBI (Basic Infantry Training School), was waiting at the airport to steal the shipments that came in. (Laughter)

So they stole the medicines we sent. They couldn't steal our doctors, however, (Laughter) and our doctors did a good job, offered their services to the people and the people were very friendly toward them. If we did it when Somoza was there, we can certainly do it now.

We have doctors now and we'll have more in the future. But we're not going to wait for those. The ones we send will come from those we have now.

If our doctors collaborate—and of course I'm sure they will—if our hospitals, the heads of hospitals, the health sectors, everybody collaborates, we can find all the doctors we need to tell the people of Nicaragua that we will send them all they need if they haven't enough themselves.

This means that if they need 100, we'll send them 100. If they need 200, we'll send them 200. And if they need as many as 500, we'll send them 500. No trouble at all. (Applause)

The need for a large-scale education campaign has also been mentioned here. And it looks as if there are some teachers here who are quite enthusiastic at the idea. A great educational campaign. (Applause)

Health and education campaign

Only a revolutionary government can carry out a great health and education campaign. Who knows how many lives they will save, especially how many children's lives they will save, with campaigns against polio, tetanus and tuberculosis.

Many lives will be being saved in just a few years. In fact, many lives will be being saved in but a few weeks. I know how much people appreciate a health campaign; I know how much people appreciate an educational campaign.

...banks

Continued from page 5

pointing out that the simplest of these is the continual and ongoing organization of the workers to defend their interests. "One of the tasks that the union organizations have in this country is to defend the revolution no matter what the cost," he said.

The compañero from the CGT also spoke of the Civil Defense Committees and the Sandinista Defense Committees. He said that these forms of organization were developing block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood, house by house. He added that the more Defense Committees we have, the more secure the revolution will be.

A representative of the Sandinista Front also spoke at the meeting, urging the workers to unionize all banking institutions, to form committees in each bank and in each section of each bank. "We must strike like a sledgehammer so that when we strike, we smash the enemy," he declared. "This union will raise the people's demands. All those who have held back this process must be thrown out."

The Sandinista compañero recommended the formation of a Provisional Committee, leading to the holding of an assembly of all banking and

Even in the midst of destruction and ruins, a revolutionary government can wage a great campaign in these fields, and since our country has plenty of experience in these things we can offer some advice in both the health and the education campaigns. And, I repeat, if they don't have enough teachers in Nicaragua to put this education campaign into effect, we are ready to send them as many as they need. (Applause)

It's not for nothing that we have more than 30,000 students in our primary education teacher training schools, and tens of thousands—50,000 I think—training as teachers in the pedagogical institutions. We're doing all right. (Applause)

We also know that our teachers go wherever they are sent—to the most remote places, to the farthest mountains, to the most forgotten little town. (Applause)

They're not interested in being in the capital. We know our teachers and our doctors and we know how much they can do. This is why our country can make quite a valuable contribution in these two fields.

Needless to say, we are also ready to collaborate, within the scope of our modest resources, in any other field.

It is not a case of our going to engage in politics in Nicaragua—and there will certainly be some who will say that we are.

Who's going to engage in politics, who's going to influence the Sandinistas? On the contrary, our teachers and our doctors will be influenced by the Sandinista spirit, and we are very pleased and happy about this. (Applause) The revolutionary spirit of the Sandinistas will have a great effect on them. Everyone knows our technicians' dedication to their work.

Campaign to aid Nicaragua

I repeat that we're glad that the United States and other countries are to help Nicaragua. What's more, we're ready to enter an emulation campaign with the United States, an emulation campaign (Applause) to see who can do the most for Nicaragua. We invite the United States, we invite all the countries of Latin America, we invite all the countries of Europe, the countries of the Third World, our sister socialist nations, everybody, to take part in an emulation campaign to help Nicaragua. (Applause) This is our position, in order to make a really human, really constructive effort based on a spirit of emulation.

Of course, when I mentioned who could do the most you all stood up. What do you think? What do you think? (Shouts of "Yes!") And that we're willing and ready to do it? (Shouts of "Yes!") Then, we ask you to raise your hands, on behalf of all our people, as an expression of this feeling of solidarity with the people of Nicaragua. (All hands go up. Applause) Our feelings, our response couldn't be otherwise. (Applause and shouts of "For whatever and however it may be necessary, commander in chief, we await your orders!")

The Sandinistas have set a further example of how much a revolutionary spirit can accomplish. Weak men never achieve any goals; timid souls never get anywhere. But a revolutionary spirit can achieve even the most incredible goals.

We thank the Sandinistas not only for their

financial workers that in turn could organize a strong union, responsive to the needs of the workers.

Workers from different banks and financial institutions spoke, bringing up their concerns and praising the victory of the Sandinista people's revolution.



Stacking 'Barricada' as it comes off the press. Militant/Fred Murphy



Sandinista woman in Managua. 'The young fighters took up the struggle. It was said that the average age was 20 years.'

beautiful gesture, their unforgettable gesture, for the great honor they have conferred on us with their presence and their affectionate and fraternal words. We also thank them for stimulating us in our own efforts, in our own struggle, because they help us to improve, to overcome our own shortcomings.

They stimulate us in our task of perfecting our work, perfecting our Revolution, in the uncompromising struggle against weaknesses, against errors, against things badly done; this struggle is not a temporary campaign, a matter of one day, one week, one month, or one year but rather a struggle that we must go on waging for many years.

Now they are faced by the problem that all those who begin a process on the ruins of their country must face, while here, with 20 years of revolution behind us, the conditions are different, the circumstances are different.

What better way to celebrate this July 26, to pay tribute to our martyrs, what better way to honor our visitors than for everyone of us to promise and commit ourselves to make more effort, to struggle harder, to work harder, to become better!

Long live the revolutionary victory in Nicaragua! (Applause and shouts of "Long Live!")

Long live Sandino! (Applause and shouts of "Long Live!")

Long live the FSLN! (Applause and shouts of "Long Live!")

Long live the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua! (Applause and shouts of "Long Live!")

Long live the friendship and solidarity between the peoples of Nicaragua and Cuba! (Applause and shouts of "Long Live!")

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

(Ovation)

Near the end of the session, Antonio Jaenz M., secretary of grievances of SITRABANIF, spoke. He pointed out that the projects that they would carry out from today on are social ones. "The technocratic mentality has come to an end. If investments are made, it will be to aid the workers. Who says that to administer a bank you have to have a title?"

He pointed to three aspects of the bank nationalizations. First, he showed that this was an obligation of the revolutionary government, because it is here that the power groups, the capitalist structures of exploitation, found their highest expression.

Second, he presented the step as necessary to save the banking and financial system, so as to prevent the loss of small savings accounts.

Third, he said, nationalization was the only way to guide the economic plan of the Junta of National Reconstruction, because—as no one should forget—the banking system still has Somoza supporters within it.

He stressed that nationalization simply meant giving to the workers that which really belongs to them—not only the banking workers but all the workers of Nicaragua.

"The formation of the banking and financial institutions is the product of the labor of the people," he said, "especially of the workers in the countryside and the cities who produce the economic surplus, which until recently was taken by the oligarchy for their own enrichment."

...Cuban road

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President Eisenhower announced that he would seek authority to reduce the sugar quota. Havana responded by denouncing this as blackmail and announcing that Cuba would sell sugar elsewhere on the world market.

The next month, Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan visited Havana and signed an agreement for the Soviet Union to buy Cuban sugar. The government began to prepare a law to expropriate the sugar mills. Fidel announced: "As they cut our sugar quota pound by pound, we will seize their mills one by one."

Hand-painted posters went up in the windows of houses throughout the island: "Sin cuota, pero sin bota." (Without the quota, but without the boot.)

The government passed a law authorizing the expropriation of American-owned property, stipulating that full compensation would be paid out of future income from sugar sold to the United States. No sugar sale, no compensation.

For some reason, that equitable arrangement made the American businessmen very angry.

Next came the refusal of the U.S. and British-owned oil refineries to process Soviet crude oil. The response of the Castro government was to "intervene." If the foreign-owned monopolies wouldn't produce according to the needs of the Cuban people, the workers themselves should open the books, expose the lies concealed beneath the fraud of "business secrets," and establish workers control over production. "Intervention" in oil refineries was a first step toward their expropriation.

Washington stepped up the financing and arming of counterrevolutionaries. Planes from Florida began bombing canefields and setting them afire. On August 6, 1960, taking the occasion

of the first Latin American Youth Congress meeting in Havana, Fidel announced the nationalization of all the American-owned sugar mills, oil refineries, and the power and telephone companies. Again, compensation would be paid out of future revenues from sugar sold to the United States.

'Down to the nails . . .'

And this was followed by further expropriations, including the holdings of the Cuban national bourgeoisie. Fidel put it: "We will nationalize them down to the nails in their shoes." By the end of October 1960, virtually every major capitalist holding had become public property. With the expropriations came state control over foreign trade and the expansion of economic planning.

These expropriations were not merely administrative acts, easily reversed at a future date. Each step was explained to the Cuban workers, and they were mobilized in actions that consolidated and carried through the expropriation of an entire ruling class. The trade unions, the local militia units, and other proletarian organizations acted directly to drive through these expropriations. The transformation of property relations was correctly seen as a conquest by the masses and for the masses.

This represented a qualitative change in the class character of the state. The workers and farmers government had used its power to advance the mobilization of the workers to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Capitalist property relations were thus overturned and the hold of the bourgeoisie on the economic levers of power was definitely broken. By the fall of 1960, a workers state had been born in the first "free territory of the Americas."

This was the opening of the socialist revolution in Latin America, right under the nose of Yankee imperialism, the despised colossus to the north.

Supermarket workers organize

By Fred Murphy

MANAGUA—The workers employed by the Mas Por Menos (More for Less) supermarket chain here faced a problem similar to that of many other Nicaraguan workers.

During the anti-Somoza insurrection, the owner of the stores declared bankruptcy and fled to Guatemala, leaving the workers in the street.

After Somoza fell, the Mas Por Menos workers began to hold meetings to decide what to do. They elected a committee and sent it to the bank where the store owner had his accounts. The bank records showed

a balance of \$50,000—more than enough to pay the wages owed the workers for June and July.

The workers' committee took its findings to the Ministry of Labor. Officials there agreed that the funds in the now-nationalized bank should be allocated for the back wages.

On August 7 the Mas Por Menos workers held another meeting and decided that since there was no sign that the owner would be returning, they should take over the stores and run them themselves. Plans are now being made to do this in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor.

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...peasants

Continued from back page

This is the consciousness that we hope to instill in the workers. They will know that their production helped to build hospitals for the whole department, as well as to provide homes, educational programs, and literacy programs. The aim is to incorporate the workers socially, as producers, in decision-making both in the plant and in the entire society.

Q. Several days ago there was an article in 'Barricada' that reported that

some peasants, I believe in León, were demanding arms to defend their gains. Will you be encouraging the development of peasant militias?

A. Yes. In fact, *there already are* peasant militias. They were built during the war, and within our army there is a high percentage of peasants. So this is not something we still have to develop.

Q. Could you explain what role the peasants played in the struggle against Somoza and in the insurrection?

A. For many years the peasants have participated directly in the struggle for democracy and freedom, for progress in Nicaragua.

This has been going on since the days of General Sandino. The peasants were the most important numerical force in that struggle for national liberation. But in this new stage as well, the first nuclei of the Sandinista Front grew in the mountains with the support of the peasants. The peasants here have been the social layer that has been hit hardest by the blows of the repression.

It is enough to recall a single example, although there are many. Somoza launched a wave of brutal repression against the peasants in the north in 1975-76 and 1977. Towns like Barrial, Sofana, Boca de Lulu were totally leveled. Barrial ceased to exist.

The Somocista gangs killed thousands of peasants. But despite all that, the peasants have always been involved in combative and patriotic activity. For that reason we have a great debt of honor to the peasants. Moreover, the peasantry is the motor force of this revolution, and it is the first beneficiary of this revolution.

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THE MILITANT

Nicaragua leader asks solidarity of U.S. people

This interview with Nicaragua's new minister of agrarian reform, Jaime Wheelock, was conducted by 'Militant' correspondent Fred Murphy in Managua on August 6. Wheelock, a member of the Joint National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, explains the steps the new regime is taking to meet the needs of Nicaragua's peasants and farm workers and to reorganize agricultural production.

At the end of the interview, Murphy asked Wheelock what workers in the United States could do to help defend the Nicaraguan revolution. The Sandinista leader's answer follows:

First I want to use the *Militant* to salute the people in the United States who have understood and been in solidarity with our struggle. Moreover, we have received medical,

financial, and material aid from the American people.

At the same time that they were aiding us, they were protesting the aid given to Somoza.

This has given us a great deal of optimism about the consciousness that exists among the American people regarding the right of other peoples to their self-determination.

It has also given us confidence that the American people will actively participate in defending those rights and in giving solidarity and aid to those who are struggling for just causes.

We are optimistic regarding the future of the struggle in the United States, and in the heightening of the consciousness of the American people and the American workers.

Today there is one big job, one immediate task, and that is to prevent and actively oppose the plans for political aggression that are being cooked up by recalcitrant, reac-

tionary sectors in the United States.

It is important to maintain this consciousness of the American people in order to oppose any aggressive plans.



JAIME WHELOCK Militant/Fred Murphy

In addition, we need economic aid to rebuild the country. The United States told us that it was going to send 300, 400 tons of aid daily. So far only one plane has arrived. That's all.

They are playing around with the aid, perhaps to put pressure on us. But the fact is that the aid has not gotten here, although the American people are in favor of giving it to the people of Nicaragua.

You have seen what it is like here. There is no food, there are no seeds to plant, there is no money. The Somocistas left us a state in ruins, and now they are trying to paralyze international solidarity.

So in the first place we need immediate aid—food, clothing, medicine, help in reconstruction.

And in addition, we need pressure to grant loans to Nicaragua, long-term low-interest loans so that we can rebuild our country.

Interview with Jaime Wheelock

Question. Could you begin by describing the situation in agriculture in recent years under the dictatorship?

Answer. We have two basic types of production. One is cereals for the domestic market; the other is production for export.

Most production for export was carried out under conditions that left agricultural workers idle a large part of the year. Export production was mainly aimed at fulfilling the needs of a very small layer of owners who held large tracts of land.

Two families—the Somozas and the Pellas—controlled more than 500,000 acres of cotton, about 250,000 acres of coffee, 200,000 head of cattle, somewhat more than 35,000 acres of sugar cane. Large holdings in tobacco and rice were basically controlled by the Somocistas.

Along with the division between production for export and production for internal consumption, there is also a division between a highly capitalist

sector of agriculture and a sector we could call poor and medium peasants.

In fact, between 40 and 60 percent of the arable land was controlled by the Somoza family. And the figure rises to about 70 percent if we add the holdings of the Somocistas.

The remaining land is controlled by about 60,000 peasants who have very small holdings, and some 100,000 peasants who do a combination of paid labor and labor on their own small plots. Many workers, even middle peasants with family farms, had to work during the planting or harvesting seasons on the large farms.

In the case of the cotton-growing industry alone, more than 250,000 agricultural workers are employed at the height of the picking. The coffee industry needs 150,000 workers during the height of the season.

All this means that there is a proletarian mass in agriculture, but it is a seasonal proletariat, a fluid proletariat—sometimes working in cotton, then in coffee, then in sugar.

In short, the capitalist export sector, as well as the wasteful agricultural

oligarchy, combined to displace the small producers, the small peasants.

In Chinandega, for example, almost all the land is covered by sugar, cotton, and banana plantations; the peasant masses have been driven from their land.

The peasants lead miserable lives in the countryside; the phenomenon of marginal neighborhoods that have arisen in the cities, is also taking place in the countryside. It is incredible. You find people living miserable lives in the countryside, suffocating on the land.

A separate development has taken place in which peasants who have lost their land have moved to the outskirts of the cities, where they live in shanty towns. You also have the case of some peasants, like those in the Chinandega area, who have almost been driven into the sea, where they eke out a living through fishing.

Q. What measures are being taken to resolve this problem?

A. In the northern part of the country, where there are no roads, no in-

frastructure, and land that is not very productive, we want to carry out a program of enlarging the landholdings of the peasants, combined with technical and development assistance.

On the other hand, in the center of the country—in the Managua valley, in Masaya and Carazo—where we have strong one-crop production, we want to solve the land problem by giving the land to the peasants.

But in other parts of the country, for example in León, in Chinandega, and in Rivas, we do not plan to turn the land over to the peasants. There we are going to set up big state farms, which will at the same time be the basis for the economic and social development of the area.

So, in some cases we will solve the problem of the landless peasants by giving them land. In other cases we are going to solve the problem of the landless agricultural laborers by incorporating them into production and giving them stable year-round work while providing big social and economic benefits.

And in the case of the Indian communities based on traditional systems of production, the land will be given not to the individual producer but to the whole Indian community. They will get sufficient land to increase their production and raise their standard of living.

Q. What type of administration is planned for the big state farms?

A. The workers on these farms will participate in the management and help make the major decisions.

But a large portion of the production of each farm will also go toward social development—health, education, housing, and so forth—for these workers and for the whole region as well.

Take, for example, the case of Rivas, where we have a large sugar mill called Dolores. Part of the production from this mill will probably be used to help solve the problem of the lack of hospitals in the entire province.

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Barricada

Carazo Province, July 29. Nicaraguan peasants mobilize to support agrarian reform. Sign reads: "The assassins' land to the peasants."