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Proxy Power and Corporate Democracy— <i>F. P. Zampa</i> and <i>A. E. McCormick, Jr.</i>	1
New Criteria for Economic Performance— <i>K. F. Flexner</i>	15
A Buddhist Economic System: In Practice— <i>F. L. Pryor</i>	17
Shadows of the Past: The Rise and Fall of Prejudice in an American City— <i>D. J. Gray</i>	33
Affordable Housing	43
Site Value Taxation in a Declining City— <i>P. S. Kochanowski</i>	45
Lethal Police Response as a Crime Deterrent— <i>D. O. Cloninger</i> ..	59
Resource Mobilization and Political Opportunity in the Nicaraguan Revolution: The Praxis— <i>A. G. Cuzán</i>	71
The Waning of Fiscal Federalism— <i>F. C. Genovese</i>	83
Substitution Bias and Cost of Living Variability for U.S. Demographic Groups— <i>S. A. Cobb</i>	85
To Quote Henry Ford, "History Is Bunk"	98
Paradigms and Cultures: Some Economic Reasons for Their Stickiness— <i>M. A. Zupan</i>	99
The Wilderness as a Source of Recreation and Renewal— <i>W. C. Hendon</i>	105
Henry George and Organized Labor— <i>F. C. Genovese</i>	113

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Resource Mobilization and Political Opportunity in the Nicaraguan Revolution:

The Praxis

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ABSTRACT. A previous paper in this *Journal* presented a resource mobilization-political opportunities paradigm about violent *revolution* in the *Third World*. Key propositions put forward in the previous paper find empirical support in a study of the *Nicaraguan revolution*. In keeping with the paradigm, the Nicaraguan revolution occurred after a period of *economic growth* during which *urbanization*, *school enrollments*, and the size of the *middle class* increased. Also consistent with the paradigm was the existence of an organization of professional revolutionaries espousing a *Marxist-Leninist ideology* which received resources from abroad, especially from Castro's *Cuba*. The *Sandinista National Liberation Front* put into practice a number of strategems which the paradigm considers to be promising in a revolution, including staging paralyzing acts of institutional *disruption*, enlisting the aid of social and economic *elites*, and deceiving the public and its allies about the true goals of the organization. Also, the FSLN was adept at exploiting political opportunities and realignments which left the *Somoza* regime weakened and vulnerable.

I

Introduction

AN EARLIER PAPER published in this *Journal* presented a resource mobilization-political opportunities paradigm (henceforth "the paradigm" or "the theory") of violent revolution against a Third World autocratic regime by a movement in which the strongest organization, the one that comes to dominate the post-revolutionary government, is Marxist-Leninist.¹ It argued that such a revolution has more to do with resources, organization, strategy, and political opportunities than with generalized discontent. Due to poverty, inequities, and corruption, discontent is assumed to be present in many Third World countries on a scale large enough to ignite a revolutionary movement. Yet revolution is a rare event,

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which suggests that discontent may be a necessary, but is hardly a sufficient condition of revolution. More crucial is an organization of professional revolutionaries capable of amassing internal and external resources and exploiting political opportunities in order to transform generalized discontent into a movement for the violent change of a regime. Because they are wedded to a totalitarian ideology of international class struggle and welded into a centralized organization that receives resources from abroad, Marxist-Leninists have a comparative advantage in waging revolution.

This paper will evaluate empirically this theory of revolution in a case study of the Nicaraguan revolution. In July 1979 a dynastic autocratic regime, that of the Somozas, was overthrown. The Somocista dynasty had spanned more than four decades, during which a father (Anastasio Somoza) and two sons (Luis and Anastasio, Jr.) successively ruled Nicaragua as president and/or head of the National Guard. The regime collapsed when Anastasio Somoza, Jr. fled to Miami. He was assassinated in Paraguay by a Sandinista-financed hit squad after nearly two years of turmoil culminating in civil war.

Immediately after the revolution, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), a nearly two decades-old Marxist-Leninist organization whose leaders had trained in Cuba and the Soviet Union, rapidly rose to hegemony. In less than three years, the Sandinistas had sidelined or driven into exile or armed resistance many of their former allies in the revolution, and aroused the opposition of the United States and Honduras. They came to the aid of a growing anti-Sandinista movement. In February 1990, in the first fully contested and internationally supervised election since the revolution, the Sandinistas lost to a 14-party coalition headed by Violeta Chamorro, widow of a long-time Somoza opponent. Mrs. Chamorro had briefly served in the first junta formed in the wake of Somoza's fall.

In retrospect, it is safe to say that the domestic and international policies pursued by the Sandinistas during their decade in power, policies which were in line with their Marxist-Leninist ideology, were not popular with the majority of Nicaraguans.² It is the thesis of this article that the resource mobilization-political opportunities paradigm sheds light on the question of how an organization whose ideology and policy goals were unrepresentative of most Nicaraguans came to power by way of revolution in the first place.

II

The Revolution Preceding the Revolution

THE PARADIGM ARGUES that revolution does not sprout spontaneously out of the soil of discontent. Nor can a revolutionary organization operate by force of will power alone.³ Certain other preconditions must be present, as well. These are:

economic growth, which generates domestic resources for the revolutionary movement; urbanization, which both reduces the cost of communication and organization among revolutionaries, and magnifies the political impact of their activities; and a growing number of students in secondary and higher education, from whom militants and sympathizers for the revolution can be recruited. Another prerequisite of revolution is the emergence of a democratic-minded middle class. Support from "conscience constituents" within the upper class is also necessary to provide resources, lend legitimacy, and weaken elite resistance to the revolutionary movement.

Table 1 presents statistical data on selective social and economic indicators which place pre-revolutionary Nicaragua in perspective with respect to both Latin America and Central America in the 1960s and 1970s. As can be readily

Table 1

PRE-REVOLUTIONARY NICARAGUA: Indicators	RANKED	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INDICATORS	
		Latin America	Central America
1978 G.N.P. per capita: \$840		15 of 20	3 of 5
Average annual G.N.P. per capita growth, 1960-1975: 2.4%		11 of 20	2.5
Calories per capita per diem			
1960: 2420		8 of 20	2
1977: 2446		9 of 20	2
Percent of school-age population enrolled in primary and secondary schools			
1960: 44		16.5 of 18	3.5
1977: 63		16 of 18	3
Average annual growth in school enrollment, 1950-1977: 2.7%		4 of 18	2
Percent of population literate			
1960: 50%		15 of 20	2
1975: 57%		17.5 of 20	3.5
Radios per 1,000 population			
1959: 53		17 of 19	4
1975: 60		15 of 19	3
T.V. sets per 1,000 population			
1965: 9.7		14 of 18	4
1975: 40		11 of 20	2
Percent of population living in cities of 20,000 or more(a)			
1960: 20		14 of 20	1
1970: 31		13 of 20	1
1980: 37		13 of 20	1
Life expectancy(b)			
1960: 46.7 years		17 of 20	4
1975: 54 years		17 of 20	4

Sources: Except as noted, all data are taken or calculated from Charles L. Taylor and David A. Jodice, eds., *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, Third Edition, Volume I, New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1983.

(a) James W. Wilkie et. al., eds., *Statistical Abstract of Latin America*, Volume 26, Los Angeles: U. of California, Latin American Center Publications, 1988.

(b) The World Bank, *World Tables*, Third Edition, Volume II, Social Data, Washington, D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1983.

noted, Nicaragua was (and is still) a poor country, although it was by no means the poorest either in Latin America or, what is perhaps more relevant, in the Central American region, where it occupied a middle position on both income and caloric consumption per capita. It fared badly, though, on some indicators which are more indicative of the general condition of the population. On literacy and life expectancy, Nicaragua was not only near the bottom, it also experienced either no change or deteriorating performance relative to both Latin America and Central America between 1960 and 1975.

On the other hand, the data also show some positive changes in economic growth, school enrollment, urbanization, and radios and television sets per capita. No doubt the benefits of these improvements "trickled down" to some extent to the poorer classes. Yet some students of Nicaragua have cautioned that

These changes and improvements, however, should not obscure the gross inequities that existed and that, in some cases, were exacerbated by the new growth. The most visible disparities were between the urban and rural areas and between the new wealthy and the new poor in the urban areas. But the most frustrating gap of all was the one that separated the Somoza family from the rest of the country. . . . There were no precise data on the Somoza family's wealth, but Anastasio Somoza reported his worth in July 1979 as \$100 million. Other sources suggested it was closer to \$900 million.⁴

Table 1 shows that in terms of urbanization, a factor stressed by the theory, Nicaragua was first in Central America. In fact, as is well known, "the urban resistance was of crucial importance in the struggle against Somoza."⁵ Put even more strongly, the Nicaraguan revolution "had an overwhelmingly urban character."⁶ As for school enrollment, it was expanding at one of the fastest rates not only in Central America but also in Latin America, so that "the Nicaraguan student population was larger than the rather small proletarian class and was increasing at an amazing rate in the sixties. University enrollment more than doubled between 1960 and 1970."⁷

By far the most politically charged aspect of the changes Nicaragua experienced before the revolution was the emergence of a new, urban-based, educated middle class with democratic aspirations which the Somoza dynasty could not or would not satisfy.⁸ It was from this class, specifically from its college-bound youths, that the leadership and many of the militants of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) sprang. According to one study of the social composition of Nicaragua's revolutionaries, nearly one-third of Sandinista militants and leaders were students, another 17 percent were professionals, and 6 percent were white collar workers.⁹

In the universities and in the Roman Catholic Church, the Sandinistas also made inroads into the upper class, tapping the conscience of wealthy students who felt guilty about their privileged status and who were alienated by the corruption of the regime. Calling themselves "revolutionary Christians," some

of these upper class youngsters made available homes, cars, farms for training, secure places for storing food and medicines, money, contacts, and related resources to the FSLN, and also lent legitimacy to the organization.¹⁰ By 1974, the Sandinistas had incorporated into their ranks "children of the better families in Nicaragua . . . children of the bourgeoisie."¹¹ In fact, the upper class became over-represented in the Sandinista leadership: "In the top ranks of the FSLN there are more than a few sons and daughters of upper-class families. . . . The roll of the Sandinista Assembly [a sort of Central Committee of the FSLN] is sprinkled with traditional upper-class surnames like Cuadra, Chamorro, Cardenal and Baltodano."¹²

III

The FSLN: An Organization of Professional Revolutionaries

THE SANDINISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (FSLN or *Frente*, for short) was founded in a series of meetings in Cuba and Honduras in the early 1960s by several erstwhile members of the then Moscow-line Communist Party, the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN).¹³ The founders were university students captivated by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara's theory of the Cuban revolution.¹⁴ Fidel Castro's regime, born in 1959, sponsored the Sandinistas from start to finish. In a recent article, Tomas Borge, sole surviving founder of the FSLN, tells how he and other young Nicaraguans went to Cuba in 1959, where, shedding their nationality and changing their names, they fought anti-Castro forces at the Bay of Pigs and the Escambray mountains. After them came "dozens, hundreds of Nicaraguans" to draw up projects and to listen to "the persuasive eloquence of Fidel." When the Sandinistas triumphed in July 1979, "a multitude of doctors, teachers, and advisors" arrived from Cuba to do "internationalist duty."¹⁵

Right from the beginning, the Sandinistas' ideology was Marxism-Leninism. Sandinista ideology, though, also had an indigenous twist: Marxism-Leninism was grafted onto the legends that had grown around the life and writings of Augusto Cesar Sandino, a self-made Nicaraguan general who had fought the U.S. Marines during the last American occupation of Nicaragua. In 1934, a year after the withdrawal of the American Marines, Sandino was murdered, on orders, or with the complicity, of Anastasio Somoza Garcia, then head of the Nicaraguan National Guard.¹⁶

Carlos Fonseca, the first leader of the FSLN, insisted on adopting Sandino as a symbol of the revolutionary movement, all the while insisting that the *Frente's* ideology boiled down to the "Marxism of Lenin, Fidel, el Che, and Ho Chi Minh."¹⁷ By then a folk hero who stood for Nicaraguan nationalism, Sandino was creatively "Marxified," made to seem part of the Marxist-Leninist tradition. In the words of the "General Political Military Platform of the FSLN for the

Triumph of the Popular Sandinista Revolution," published in May 1977, the Sandinistas' cause "is the sacred and historical cause of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Sandino." According to this document, the FSLN sees itself as a "Marxist-Leninist vanguard" which is "armed with the revolutionary theories of the proletariat and the Sandinista historical legacy," and whose "destination is socialism." The kind of "socialism" the Sandinistas had in mind was along the lines of "the first socialist state" born "in Bolshevik Russia in 1917," and of "revolutionary Cuba."¹⁸

A commitment to violence was intrinsic to Sandinista ideology.¹⁹ The Sandinistas waged guerrilla warfare, robbed banks, kidnapped for ransom, took hostages, and assassinated alleged collaborators of the regime. A number of Sandinistas took part in Middle-East airline hijackings organized by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.²⁰

The FSLN became a strictly hierarchical organization patterned after the Leninist "vanguard" model.²¹ A number of levels differentiated between categories of members according to ideological commitment, a method which kept the organization small but disciplined. In addition to Cuba, the true militants went to East Germany, North Vietnam, and the Soviet Union for visits, study, and training.²² At the top of the hierarchy was the National Directorate, a small group of men described by the Sandinistas themselves as "the supreme leadership body and central authority of the FSLN and of the Sandinista People's Revolution."²³ Being a member of the National Directorate in the mid-1970s was dangerous. Nine of the 14 Sandinistas who served as directors in those years paid for it with their lives.²⁴

Between 1975 and 1978 the FSLN suffered a three-way split over strategy and tactics. However, after meeting in Havana in late 1978, the three factions were fused once again to meet Fidel Castro's conditions for supplying the Sandinistas with weapons for their final offensive, in which an "internationalist brigade" of Latin American revolutionaries played a significant role. "When the FSLN final offensive was launched in mid-1979, as many as 50 Cuban military advisors participated in it and maintained regular radio contact with Havana."²⁵ The Sandinistas also received material support from non-Communist countries, notably Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, and Costa Rica, and won recognition from the Organization of American States, which, in an unprecedented act, called on Somoza to resign.²⁶

Having been around for almost two decades when the autocracy began to crack, a development which will be described below, the FSLN was in an enviable position: it had ideologically committed, organizationally disciplined, and militarily trained cadres, and also weapons and strong foreign backing. This is exactly the kind of organization that resource mobilization theory expects would take the fullest advantage of a revolutionary situation. By contrast, Somoza's civilian opposition was largely unarmed and, when it came to revolution, con-

sisted of rank amateurs. Once Somoza fled and the National Guard disintegrated, the FSLN quickly moved to pick up the pieces. It monopolized the coercive instruments of the provisional government, and used this power to consolidate its control over Nicaragua.²⁷

IV

Successful Sandinista Strategems

ACCORDING TO THE THEORY, carrying out revolution requires disrupting institutional life in the country, securing support from among elites, and deceiving the public about the real goals of the revolutionaries. Disruptions attract media attention and activate third parties who, out of sympathy for the revolutionary movement, or a desire to return the country to normalcy, pressure the government into making concessions to its enemies. The result is at once a propaganda boost for the revolutionaries and a demoralizing blow to the autocracy. To secure support from among domestic and international elites, as well as the public at large, the revolutionaries resort to strategic deception. For example, they may enter into temporary alliances with reputable personages who, although they are given no real power in the revolutionary organization, are used to project a false image of moderation, pluralism, or whatever other quality is deemed politically expedient in the last stages of the revolution.²⁸

In their long war against the Somoza regime, the Sandinistas did all those things. Twice in the space of four years, they staged spectacular hostage-taking operations in which high status figures were held captive for a few hours until the government, fearful for their lives, capitulated to Sandinista demands. The first time was in December 1974: a squad of thirteen FSLN commandos stormed a party in an upper-class district of Managua, killed the host, whose daughter was in league with the Sandinistas, and took a number of prominent persons hostage, including Nicaragua's ambassador to the U.S. (who was Somoza's brother-in-law), the Foreign Minister, and Managua's mayor. The U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua, who was being honored at the party, had departed only moments earlier. The raiders threatened to kill all captives within 36 hours unless the government paid them \$5 million in ransom, published a lengthy communique calling the regime "the most despicable dictatorship in Latin America," released imprisoned Sandinista comrades (including Daniel Ortega, who later served as president of the Sandinista government), and let them all fly safely to Cuba. Msgr. Miguel Obando y Bravo, Managua's Roman Catholic Archbishop (now Cardinal), mediated between the kidnappers and Somoza, who gave in to all demands, except that the ransom was reduced to \$1 million.

As the airplane carrying the Sandinistas and four guarantors of the agreement (the Archbishop, the Papal Nuncio, and the Mexican and Spanish ambassadors

to Nicaragua) took off for Havana, "a loud cheer went up from hundreds of Nicaraguans inside and outside the terminal building. The guerrillas . . . were also applauded by many passers-by as they drove in a bus with their hostages to the airport."²⁹ The incident brought the Sandinistas international recognition. Although they were denounced as terrorists, they acquired "a reputation for audacity that attracted many new militants."³⁰

In August 1978, the Sandinistas did it again, only on an even grander scale. Two dozen FSLN commandos dressed in National Guard uniforms rushed at the National Palace, where Congress met, killed a guard, and took over 1,000 hostages, among them ministers, legislators, and journalists. Threatening to execute the hostages one by one unless their conditions were met within eight hours, the commandos demanded, among other things, the release of dozens of imprisoned Sandinistas (including Tomas Borge, one of the original FSLN founders, who was later put in charge of Sandinista state security), the broadcasting of a communique in the nation's media, \$10 million in ransom, and safe conduct out of the country. As in 1974, the raid activated a host of high-status actors, including prelates of the Catholic Church and ambassadors from neighboring countries. Once again, they pleaded with Somoza not to retaliate, and offered themselves as intermediaries and guarantors of an agreement between the government and the hostage-takers. Except for obtaining a 24-hour extension of the deadline and reducing the ransom to half a million dollars, Somoza capitulated in order to, as he put it, "save human lives."³¹

As well as carrying out highly disruptive, not to say paralyzing, operations widely reported in the national and international media, the Sandinistas enlisted the help of a group of elite actors, among them businessmen, lawyers, writers, and priests, to build bridges between themselves and the very bourgeoisie they despised. Formed in 1977, "The Twelve" issued their first statement, in Costa Rica and Washington, two days after the FSLN launched an October offensive. It said in part: "There can be no permanent solution to the escalating armed conflict, which now threatens to envelop all of Nicaragua, without the participation of the Sandinista National Liberation Front."³² Unbeknownst to their listeners or other members of "The Twelve," the group included several secret Sandinistas who did not make their membership public until after the revolution.³³

"The Twelve," as well as Pastora, were used to attract support from sources which would not have been as ready to support the FSLN directly. Combined with soothing public statements that seemed to suggest a backing away from Marxist-Leninist goals, the tactic had the desired effect: "Although many members of the Sandinist (sic) guerrillas are Marxists, they have frequently said that socialism could not come immediately to Nicaragua and that a return to democracy is their aim. Their disclaimer resulted in the current alliance between them and

non-Marxist opponents of the regime, including even conservative politicians and businessmen."³⁴

The alliance between the FSLN and the non-Marxist opposition culminated in June 1979 in the formation in Costa Rica of a five-member junta that would serve as a provisional government after the revolution.³⁵ Chaired by Daniel Ortega, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, it included Alfonso Robelo, representing a sector of the business community, and Violeta Chamorro, widow of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, publisher and editor of the newspaper *La Prensa*. His assassination in January 1978 galvanized the business community against Somoza, an event to be discussed in the next section. The remaining two junta members were secret Sandinistas: Sergio Ramirez, who would become Vice-President of the Sandinista government, and Moises Hassan, an American-educated leader of a Sandinista front organization. In a letter to the Organization of American states, the junta pledged "to convoke the Nicaraguans to the first free elections they will have in this century, so that they can elect their municipal officials and a constituent assembly, and later, the supreme authorities in the country."³⁴

Nine months after the revolution, both Robelo and Chamorro quit the provisional government. They joined the ranks of a growing anti-Sandinista opposition that included many former FSLN allies disillusioned with the new regime. (Although much later, Hassan, too, quit the FSLN, denouncing Sandinista corruption.) Their disenchantment seemed justified when in August 1980, brushing aside calls for early elections from their erstwhile allies, Defense Minister Humberto Ortega declared that the elections would not be held until 1985 (they took place in 1984) and that, in any case, "The elections we speak of are very different from the elections desired by the oligarchs and traitors, conservatives and liberals, reactionaries and imperialists. . . . Never forget that *our elections will be to perfect revolutionary power, not to hold a raffle among those who seek to hold power, because the people hold power through their vanguard—the FSLN and its National Directorate.*"³⁷

V

Exploiting Political Opportunities

THE OUTBREAK OF REVOLUTION against an established autocratic regime has much to do with changes in what is called "the political opportunity structure."³⁸ A revolutionary organization may hammer away at a dictatorship for many years without so much as making a dent on it. Then, with a suddenness that surprises rulers and revolutionaries alike, unforeseen events and political realignments combine to trigger mass protests and demonstrations of such magnitude and intensity as to threaten to trample the regime underfoot. By hurriedly putting

itself at the head of the mass movement, a leadership claim legitimated by its long, lonely struggle against the autocracy, the revolutionary organization is swept into power.

This is exactly what happened in Nicaragua: From its founding in the early 1960s all the way to the mid-1970s, the FSLN made little progress in its war against the dynasty. Yet, as the decade drew to a close, the Sandinistas climbed to power on the back of a mass movement not of their own making.

Two events proved decisive in alienating elites and populace from the Somoza regime: its response to the 1972 earthquake, which devastated Managua, and the mysterious murder of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro Cardenal, a leading critic of the dynasty. The earthquake caused at least 5,000 deaths and left over 100,000 people homeless. After the initial shock, Somoza turned the tragedy into a business opportunity, channelling foreign aid through his companies and purchasing property in areas of the city slated for reconstruction. This exploitation of a national disaster for personal profit scandalized Church and business people, not to mention international donors.³⁹ This was the beginning of a parting of the ways between the Somoza autocracy and significant sectors of Nicaragua's social and economic elites.

The breach widened beyond repair when, on January 8, 1978, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, publisher and editor of *La Prensa*, Nicaragua's opposition newspaper, was assassinated on a Managua street. Chamorro's son, Pedro Joaquin Jr. "is convinced that Somoza was not responsible for the assassination"⁴⁰ and his widow said years later "that she [now] suspects the FSLN of assassinating her husband."⁴¹ At the time, however, the killing was reflexively blamed on the regime. Like the activation of a tripwire, Chamorro's death set off a chain reaction of protests and strikes executed by a multi-class constellation of political forces opposed to the continuation of the dynasty.

For its part, Washington's policy toward Somoza, which had been unusually warm during the Nixon years, began to cool during the Ford administration, and became downright chilly under President Carter.⁴² After Carter's inauguration, no more new military aid was sent to Nicaragua from the United States. Instead, Washington chided the regime for paying insufficient respect to human rights. About the same time, Somoza suffered a heart attack, and had to fly to the United States for treatment. To make matters worse for the regime, for over a decade it had neglected the National Guard, whose numbers failed to keep up with the growing population.⁴³ By 1975, Nicaragua's population exceeded two million, but the National Guard amounted to a mere 5,000 men. Furthermore, the regime's intelligence apparatus was "inadequate,"⁴⁴ and its air force "derelict."⁴⁵ Following the National Palace raid, Somoza had to repress a coup attempt by dozens of disgruntled guardsmen unhappy over his caving-in to hostage

takers. The combined effect of these trends and events was to weaken the regime significantly, politically as well as militarily.

In October 1977, the Sandinistas launched an offensive which, though militarily insignificant, had great political resonance. It activated an anti-Somoza front that grew wider and deeper following Chamorro's murder and the National Palace raid. For nearly a year after the raid, the regime had to contend with an endless series of strikes and uprisings that spread from city to city like a "prairie fire."⁴⁶

The dynamics of the revolutionary movement surprised even the Sandinistas. By the end of 1978, explains Humberto Ortega:

The mass movement went beyond the vanguard's capacity to lead. We certainly could not oppose that mass movement, stop that avalanche. On the contrary, we had to put ourselves at the forefront in order to lead and channel it to a certain extent.⁴⁷

Notes

1. Alfred G. Cuzán, "Resource Mobilization and Political Opportunity in the Nicaraguan Revolution: The Theory," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Vol. 49, No. 4, pp. 401-12.

2. Although unpopular with most Nicaraguans, the Sandinistas attracted a great deal of sympathy and support from Western intellectuals and artists, not least scholars from the United States and Europe whose specialty is Latin America. For a critical analysis of Latin Americanists' love affair with the Sandinistas, see William Ratliff, "Latin American Studies: Up from Radicalism?," *Academic Questions*, Vol 3, No. 1, Winter 1989-90, pp. 60-74. For a lively debate of this issue, see the contributions of Donald C. Hodges, John A. Booth, and Douglas Payne in *Nicaragua in Focus*, April, 1988, pp. 12-42.

3. This might be termed the Guevarist *foco* fallacy. In his guerrilla manual, Che Guevara wrote that "It is not always necessary to wait until all the conditions for revolution are present; the insurrectionary nucleus [*foco* in Spanish] can actually create their fruition." Quoted in Ernst Halperin, "Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and the Reality of Guerrilla Warfare," in Michael Radu, ed., *Violence and the Latin American Revolutionaries*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988, p. 37. At first, the Sandinistas tried to implement the *foco* strategy, but failed miserably. See David Nolan, *The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, Institute of Interamerican Studies, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Miami, 1984, pp. 24-25.

4. Robert A. Pastor, *Condemned to Repetition. The United States and Nicaragua*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp. 44-45. See also Dennis Gilbert, *Sandinistas. The Party and the Revolution*, Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990, p. 81, which notes that in the two decades preceding the revolution, "the Nicaraguan economy—led by agriculture—was flourishing, but hunger was spreading. The number of small children suffering malnutrition doubled between 1965 and 1975."

5. Ian Roxborough, "Theories of Revolution: The Evidence from Latin America," *LSE Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1989, pp. 108-9.

6. Farideh Farhi, "State Disintegration and Urban-Based Revolutionary Crisis. A Comparative Analysis of Iran and Nicaragua," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1988, p. 245.

7. Humberto Belli, *Breaking Faith. The Sandinista Revolution and Its Impact on Freedom and Christian Faith in Nicaragua*, Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985, p. 11.

8. Farhi, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

9. Roxborough, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

10. See Belli, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 19-22, and Farhi, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-51.
11. Arturo Cruz Jr., *Memoirs of a Counter-Revolutionary*, New York: Doubleday, 1989, p. 61.
12. Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.
13. Since the 1970s, the PSN has evolved in a social-democratic direction: today, this party is a member of Violeta Chamorro's UNO coalition in the national assembly.
14. Donald C. Hodges, *Intellectual Foundations of the Nicaraguan Revolution*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. See also David Nolan, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-24.
15. Tomas Borge, "Cuba's Explicit Solidarity," *Barricada*, 27 July 1990, p. 3. *Barricada* is the Sandinistas' official organ. Borge's reference to "hundreds" of Nicaraguans going to Cuba is revealing, since for most of the years between its founding and the revolution the total number of FSLN militants never reached more than a few hundred. Thus, most of these militants must have been to Cuba at one time or another.
16. Richard L. Millett, "Historical Setting," in *Nicaragua: A Country Study*, James D. Rudolph, ed., Washington, D.C.; The American University, 1982, p. 29; Shirley Christian, *Nicaragua. Revolution in the Family*, New York: Vintage Books, 1986 p. 25.
17. Quoted in Nolan, *op. cit.*, p. 37. On Fonseca's adaptation of Sandino, see Scott Palmer, "Carlos Fonseca and the Construction of Sandinismo in Nicaragua," *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, 1988, pp. 91-109.
18. The full text of the "Platform" is reproduced in Jiri Valenta and Esperanza Duran, eds., *Conflict in Nicaragua. A Multidimensional Perspective*, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987, pp. 285-318.
19. Nolan, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 and 34.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 138. See also David J. Kopilow, *Castro, Israel, & the P.L.O.*, Washington: The Cuban American National Foundation, 1985.
21. Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-34.
22. See the biographical sketches of Sandinista militants in Appendix II of Nolan, *op. cit.* On p. 35, Nolan notes that in the 1960s the FSLN had only about 50 "activists."
23. According to *Barricada*, the party's newspaper, as quoted in Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 42. On the same page, Daniel Ortega is quoted as having said that "the Sandinista Front is here as the guide of the revolution, with the National Directorate as its highest leader."
24. Nolan, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
25. John Norton Moore, *The Secret War in Central America. Sandinista Assault on World Order*, Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1987, pp. 10-11.
26. Pastor, *op. cit.* p. 149. See also Dennis R. Gordon and Margaret M. Munro, "The External Dimension of Civil Insurrection. International Organizations in the Nicaraguan Revolution," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 59-81.
27. Stephen M. Gorman, "Power and Consolidation in the Nicaraguan Revolution," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 133-149.
28. For a candid, if cynical, account of how the Sandinistas purposefully used tactical alliances with "the democratic elements of the bourgeoisie," see "The Seventy-two Hour Document," an internal FSLN report of a secret meeting of the National Directorate issued in October 1979, less than two months after the revolution. The document appears as Appendix C in Marc Falcoff and Robert Royal, eds., *The Continuing Crisis. U.S. Policy in Central America and the Caribbean*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987, pp. 493-517.
29. *New York Times*, 31 December 1974, p. 3. The incident is also described in Nolan, *op. cit.*, pp. 45, 141; Christian, *op. cit.*, p. 37; Pastor, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40; and Belli, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.
30. *New York Times*, 7 January 1985, p. 4A. Tomas Borge, one of the three original founders of the FSLN, who later became Minister of State Security, emphasized the international significance

of the Christmas party raid: "It put the sandinista movement in the spotlight world-wide, and our organization started to be recognized internationally." Quoted in Pastor, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

31. *Washington Post*, 25 August 1978, p. 1A. The National Palace raid and its political consequences are described in Pastor, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-73, and Christian, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-77.

32. Quoted in Pastor, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

33. Nolan, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

34. *New York Times*, 25 August 1978, p. 83. In June 1979, as the denouement of the dynasty approached, "the FSLN was working overtime to project an image of moderation." Pastor, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

35. Here's how the Sandinistas described the formation of the junta: "Actually, the selection and organization of the government was a relatively easy task, as it did not have to be negotiated with the opposition parties of the bourgeoisie, but merely involved appointing patriotic figures who were somewhat representative." See "The Seventy-two Hour Document," in Falcoff and Royal, *op. cit.*, p. 497.

36. Quoted in Christian, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

37. Quoted in Douglas W. Payne, *The Democratic Mask. The Consolidation of the Sandinista Revolution*, New York: Freedom House, Perspectives on Freedom Number 3, 1985, p. 28. Emphasis in original transcript of speech published in *Barricada*, the FSLN newspaper.

38. Sidney Tarrow, *Struggling to Reform. Social Movements and Policy Change During Cycles of Protest*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, Western Societies Program, Occasional Paper No. 15, 1983, p. 27.

39. Belli, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22; Pastor, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37; and Philip J. Williams, "The Catholic Hierarchy in the Nicaraguan Revolution," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1985, pp. 341-369.

40. Pastor, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

41. Belli, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

42. Pastor, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-76; Anthony Lake, *Somoza Falling*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989; Marc Falcoff, "Somoza, Sandino, and the United States," in Falcoff and Royal, *op. cit.*, pp. 297-320.

43. Alfred G. Cuzán and Richard J. Heggen, "A Micro-Political Explanation of the 1979 Nicaraguan Revolution," *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1982, pp. 156-170.

44. Clifford Krauss, "Revolution in Central America?," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 3, 1987, p. 571.

45. Cruz, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 51.

46. Pastor, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

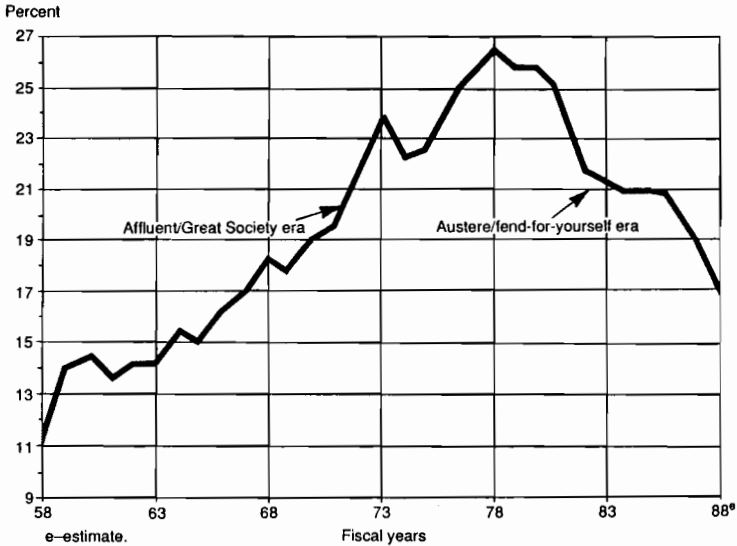
47. Tomas Borge et al., *Sandinistas Speak*, New York: Pathfinder Press, 1986, p. 72.

The Waning of Fiscal Federalism

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY had gradually shifted from lower to higher levels of government for twenty-five years until 1978. Then the process was reversed under President Carter and even more sharply so under Reagan and Bush. This plus the loss of revenue to state governments during the 1982-83 recession further increased their tendency to decrease their grants to local governments. Is it any wonder now that we hear of great urban problems and taxpayers resistance at the state and local levels? The "smart politics" of the federal administrations have roiled politics at the state level.

The underlying fiscal facts are well illustrated in the following table.

Exhibit 2.1. Fiscal Federalism: The Rise and Decline of Federal Aid, 1958-88
(as a percentage of state-local outlays)



Source: ACIR Staff.

The table was prepared by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. It comes from *The Changing Face of Fiscal Federalism* edited by Thomas R. Swartz and John E. Peck. (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1990, p. 22). It is a compilation of cogent and pertinent articles by very well qualified scholars. These were presented at a conference hosted by the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts and the Department of Economics at Notre Dame University under a grant from the AT&T Foundation.

If this book is known about and read "[It] will help the citizenry make informed judgments as to the advisability of continuing the decentralization of government finance." (p. x).

FRANK C. GENOVESE

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