

of "informal classes"—a kind of basic citizenship class for the entire youth of the country. The revolution was a "profoundly emotional" experience for the children, Tunnerman explained. Many children fought directly in the war; it was also a "great pedagogical process" that cannot simply be ignored in a return to normalcy. The courses, based on the themes of the Somoza dynasty, the recent revolutionary process, and the goals of the new government, will provide a "one month pause" to overcome "the nightmare of the war and learn what freedom is."

Political freedoms

With the projected lifting of the state of emergency Aug. 22, press liberties will also be restored. Two newspapers, the conservative *La Prensa* and *El Centroamericano*, have already begun printing, in addition to the government-backed *La Barricada*. Images or organizing for Somoza will continue to be expressly prohibited in the press as in all areas.

Massive popular organization has been initiated to ensure popular defense of the revolution and national reconstruction program. A nationwide Sandinista Labor Council is being organized along with organizations of youth, peasants and women.

While even discussion of national elections for a legislature and executive have been put off until the reconstruction of the country is at least securely on the road, local governments are being formed across the country around the Sandinista-led Defense Committees, local organizations which formed the backbone of the resistance in the cities and towns during the period of the insurrection. A national leadership for the Defense Committees will be elected in Managua shortly as the primary means for direct popular participation in the country's planning processes.

Foreign policy

The government has declared its intention to join the Nonaligned movement, and maintain an independent foreign policy. The President of neighboring Costa Rica was the first foreign head of state to visit, followed by Panama's General Torijos. Mexican President Lopez Portillo, ex-Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez, and President Castro of Cuba have all be publicly invited, in demonstration of thanks for their support during the civil war.

In discussions with U.S. Secretary of State Vance, in Quito, Ecuador, other members of the junta expressed their willingness to "forget the past and look towards the future" in relations with the U.S., provided the United States allows Nicaraguans to decide their future for themselves.

—Gretchen Small

London wants a showdown

In an Aug. 4 commentary entitled "Who Inherits Nicaragua," the London Economist presented a scenario for forced radicalization of Nicaragua and a super-power confrontation in the Western Hemisphere. Excerpts follow:

"Does the fate of so small a country really matter? Yes. The emergence of something that could be described as a 'second Cuba' would be the last nail in the coffin of President Carter's reelection chances. It would give Russia a convenient staging post from which to send arms and support to revolutionary movements in the Americas....

"Russia's hesitation in getting behind the Nicaraguan *compañeros* gives the Americans their chance. ... They certainly can afford, preferably channeled through other Latin American countries, the two types of aid Nicaragua genuinely needs: the food required ... to keep thousands of Nicaraguans from starving; and the foreign exchange to get industry, farms and cities moving again. What is not needed is massive helping of general aid without financial or democratic strings ... The United States and its democratic Latin allies have no obligation to save Russia money by rebuilding Nicaragua if it is then likely to turn around and bite them. The best service they can do Nicaragua would be to guarantee it foreign-exchange cover sufficient to mobilize its postwar resources to the full at a non-inflationary pace. Bring on the IMF?

"The Americans should not be misled, either, by the myth that Mr. Castro turned to the Russians because American aid to Cuba was cut off first....

"President Carter has one other weapon in his armoury. That is to warn Russia that the jingle of its money in Nicaragua would be seen as a direct challenge ... In the short run, Mr. Brezhnev must know that Salt II is dead if Nicaragua drops into his hands. In the long run, a kick below America's belt could provoke one back—a western guarantee to defend Yugoslav independence, perhaps? Mr. Brezhnev may wonder whether a foothold on the American mainland is worth arousing the sort of passion which has lain dormant in the United States since the Cuban missile crisis."