THE POLITICIZATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN NICARAGUA: 1967-1994

REGIME TYPE AND REGIME STRATEGY

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Janet C. Coplin, B.A., M.A.
Denton, Texas
May, 1996
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Understanding how change occurs in lesser developed countries, particularly in Latin America has been the subject of a prolonged theoretical academic debate. That debate has emphasized economics more than politics in general and predictability over unpredictability in the Latin American region. This paper challenges these approaches. Explaining change requires an examination of the politics of public policy as much as its economic dimensions. Second, change in the Latin American region may be less predictable than it appears. Scholars maintain that change in Latin America occurs when contending elites negotiate it. Their power comes from the various resources they possess. Change, therefore, is not expected to occur as a function of regime change per se.

This paper considers the treatment of education policy in Nicaragua during the regimes of the dynastic authoritarianism of Anastasio Somoza Debayle (1967-1979), the revolutionary governments of the Sandinistas (1979-1990), and the democratic-centrist government of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (1990-1996). The central research question is: When regimes change, do policies change? The methodology defines the independent variable as the regime and education policy as the dependent variable. It posits three hypotheses. The right-wing regime of Somoza was expected to restrict both the qualitative aspects and the financing of education; (2) the left-wing regimes of the Sandinistas were hypothesized to have expanded both; and (3) the democratic-centrist regime of Chamorro was expected to have both expanded and restricted certain aspects of education policy.
Several chapters describe these regimes' expansive or restrictive education strategies. A comparative analysis of these 26 years demonstrates several variables' effect over time. An OLS regression and a times series analysis specifies the relationship between regime change and percent of GDP each regime devoted to education. Both the statistical and qualitative findings of this study confirm the hypotheses. The study reveals that, as regimes changed, education strategies and policies changed. Such findings challenge some current thought about political behavior with respect to Latin American development in particular and development theory in general.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Students of political development have until recently paid insufficient attention to the question of education policy. A recent move toward more pragmatism in the study of development has opened opportunities to study the links of regime type and specific policy issues (including education) to political development. Education policy reveals a regime's perception of the role education should play in political development. Regime change and its effect upon education policies provide a means to study regime performance and regime legitimacy. This study examines three successive Nicaraguan regimes (those of Somoza 1967-1979, the Sandinistas 1979-1990, and Violeta Chamorro 1990-1993) and their education policies. It suggests a relationship between regime type, public policy and policy outcome. Finally, it speculates on what effect education policies had on the legitimacy of the three regimes represented in that 26 year period.

Both scholars and political leaders grapple with political development. The former generally focus on theory, the latter on reality. The evolution of scholarly thinking about development over recent decades has often seemed disengaged from the pragmatic concerns with which leaders must struggle. Recent development studies, however, have shown an increased interest in pragmatic public policy issues. In an effort to tie these two points of view more closely together, this study examines regime change and public policy. I believe that to study the role of the regime and the state in making public policy and policy outcomes in the field of education may provide a productive way in which to examine the problem of political development.

This study specifically addresses regime change, the politicization of public education policy, and the outcome of those policies in the developing country of Nicaragua during three distinctive periods between 1967 and 1993. Its goal is to determine whether and
to what extent regime change in Nicaragua -- marked by profound ideological swings -- has
brought about policy change in education and, as a consequence, affected Nicaragua's
political development.

Development Theory: Changing Foci

Since 1960 the study of comparative politics has focused heavily upon the political
development of less developed countries. In a quest to develop a grand theory of political
development political scientists have struggled long and mightily, their discussion evolving
through several stages. As the following discussion reveals, the debate about political
development has over time become rather more pragmatic -- grounded less in the sweeping
conceptualizations of sociopolitical change of the early years and somewhat more in
narrower approaches to specific public policy questions.

Public education occupies a rather modest amount of attention in the literature on
political development theory. However, most development theorists assume that the
education of children and youth is a requisite for national progress. This view holds that a
society's political or economic progress is hampered by an uneducated population.
Explanations for the persistence of an uneducated populace are threefold: that the regime has
no desire to educate its citizens, that the economy is too poor to provide for education, or a
combination of both. The explanation that regimes prefer an uneducated populace implies
an authoritarian regime, something antithetical to early scholarly notions of political
development and of the virtual universality of its pursuit. The assumption that democracy
must be a goal of development clearly has permeated development theory these last 35 years.
That emphasis has been reassessed in the last ten years, to conclude that divergent paths
which enhance the democratic process may be probable, but not necessarily predictable. In
short, ideology has colored the way academics have assessed the relationship between regimes, education policies, and political development.

The lengthy academic debate about political development has included three different research concerns: that of the comparativist who seeks cross-national patterns; that of the area specialist who seeks intra-national patterns, and that of the internationalist who seeks patterns in a global context. This study of Nicaragua considers, in part, all three of these concerns. It examines regime change over time within a country affected by United States hegemony. It focuses on political elements of education and education policy rather than merely on its economic outcomes. This is not to slight the importance of the economic perspective, but is to suggest that a balance of political and economic concerns is more pragmatic. Martin McLean (1981) touts the importance of examining more than the economic ramifications of education policies. He suggests that it is a mistake to assume that economic development and social justice go hand in hand for underdeveloped countries. He concludes that not enough attention is paid to the complete political context of development. For example, when accepted by an underdeveloped country from a foreign power or an international agency, external assistance for social development is inevitably subject to conditions by the donor. Consequently, education as a part of social development has political strings that may direct policy outcomes in which social justice or social equity is not considered.

Development theory has evolved through three stages since 1960, and currently is, I believe, entering a fourth stage. Each of the first three stages has attempted to achieve "grand theory" and each has failed (Milne, 1972; Pratt, 1973). The first stage emphasized what has been called "modernization." Prompted by an economic development model laced with democratic assumptions (Rostow, 1960), modernization theory sought to describe the
maturation process of the political, economic, and social institutions of a country (Almond, 1960, 1970, 1973; Apter, 1965; Pye, 1963, 1965, 1966). Walter Rostow, for example, argued that economics drives development and that all political regimes can expect to experience sequential change as they progress through stages of economic development.¹

Rostow's logic would have field hands converted to industrial workers as a sure consequence of economic growth, ultimately begetting economic well being and democracy. Successful modernization, in this conception, was essentially synonymous with both capitalism and democracy because its aim was to create modern, free nations (Hanson and Brembeck, 1965: p. 34). This insistence of equating political development solely with democracy, although understandable at the height of the Cold War, was an arbitrary equation. It short changed a Third World country's options to steer its own developmental course.

The second stage of political development theory arose principally in the 1970's as a response to the overly simplistic notion of modernization.² Samuel Huntington reversed the political development question by arguing that political institutions rather than economic ones drive political development. Simply put, the first step for a regime to legitimize itself (a prerequisite for Huntington) is to create political institutions that produce necessary social and economic policies. If this does not occur, the society's economic and social policy

¹ Walter Rostow wrote The Stages of Economic Growth in the context of the Cold War. For that reason, it is considered here retrospectively since it emphasized certain political assumptions about the development process without real foundation for such. His book was a "non-Communist manifesto."

expectations will outstrip the capacity of the regime to perform. As a result, there will arise instability—the antithesis of development. Leonard Binder et al. in *Crises and Sequences in Political Development* (1971) labeled the tools of political modernization: they are legitimacy, political culture, identity, capacity, and distribution.³

Dependency theory, another response to modernization theory, holds that underdeveloped countries are held hostage by their politico-economic links to world powers, whose power and economic advantages thwart political, economic, and social maturation in the less developed nations. Moreover, under dependence, external control corrupts these same maturation processes that should be associated with development to such an extent that the elites in underdeveloped countries manipulate this arrangement to their benefit at the expense of their own citizens. This "internal colonialism" makes political development difficult, and the establishment of legitimacy hinges on the consensus of a few groups.⁴

In the 1980's, the third stage of development theory, scholars directed their focus on development toward yet another perspective: the connection between public policy and political economy (Baran, 1957; Brewer, 1975; Rothchild, 1978; Sloan, 1981-1982, 1984). In part, this focus was a counterattack on the assumptions of dependency theories and a refinement of the idea that political and economic policies reciprocally influence each other.

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³ Notable scholars like David Apter, Lucien Pye, Joseph LaPolambara, Sydney Verba, and James Coleman sought in this volume a logical explanation of the order in which development proceeds. They admitted that past research made erroneous assumptions, including the belief that the establishment of a national identity would more than likely resolve a regime's legitimacy crisis.

⁴ Internal colonialism refers to the split between the center and the peripheral groups of a society. The center represents the urbane, economically well off, more educated urban power brokers. The periphery represents the rural, less economically well off, less educated sectors lacking political power.
These scholars basically examined the regime's responsibility for its own successes and failures, foreign interference not withstanding. The question examined is whether the external control of underdeveloped countries by the developed nations was really responsible for political and economic stagnation, or whether those countries themselves were also partially to blame for this inertia. This research led scholars like Richard Higgott (1983) to argue that "what has become increasingly apparent over the first three decades of development theorizing is that neither development nor underdevelopment can any longer be thought of as the universal processes they were initially assumed to be, by both modernization and dependency theorists" (p. 74).

Higgott did not imply that such theories are entirely useless, but suggested that scholars need to go beyond the examination of fundamental social restructuring by employing analyses of public policy or political economy, in order to work toward the development of a "grand theory" (p. 77). This 1980s research emphasis on public policy demonstrated at once both its usefulness and its bias: "The focus on public policy has provided continuity in that it provides a way of managing and administering the diffusion of aid, technology, and cultural rationality, and of ensuring the creation and support of Western oriented decision making elites (Higgott, 1983; p. 100).

Development theory in the 1990's may have entered a fourth stage: the examination of the regime's role as a primary actor for the state in the development process, to form a bridge between policy and regime legitimacy. Current research seems to have moved toward pragmatism and more narrowly focused research questions. Indeed, Higgot (1983) had already argued that the search for "grand theory" in political development might be better served by discovering micro-level linkages between regimes and societies. Less developed countries, like Nicaragua, are being forced to develop pragmatic policies and styles of
governing. In this search for pragmatism, I am suggesting that there will be a connection between policy strategies and legitimacy. For that reason, researchers need to look for answers to the regime as a primary component of the State.

The growth of policy studies over the last decade and the greater congeniality of its advice to incumbent Third World regimes—especially concerning stability and elite maintenance—has given such studies an increasingly influential voice in the Third World policymaking process. A primary or even secondary focus on regime maintenance invariably means that research will focus on problems of a particular regime and the domestic and international bureaucracies that serve it. (Higgott, 1983: p. 98)

To complement these aforementioned forays into development theory, it seems timely to focus on the intent of a state's policies through the regime that suggests them, and the society's responses to the these policies over time. In that manner one may be able to determine whether, as regimes change, their specific policies actually change and to what effect. Nicaragua seems an excellent nation in which to conduct such an analysis.

Politics and Education: Taking a Backseat in Research

Research on how public education specifically affects political development has usually taken a back seat to that of education's economic consequences. Anthony Dewees and Robert Arnove (1992) suggest that there has been a gap in the research which links politics to education policy.

Working against this larger trend, however, has been a handful of scholars. Among them, Robert Arnove (1994) has made the most consistent contributions of research to address this void. His strategy has been to "place the education system in its national and international context and document the tensions and contradictions that occur when education is used as an agent of social change" (p. 6). From such a perspective as Arnove's,
one can begin to understand that political agendas in education may be a product of regime change.

Martin Carnoy has also contributed extensively to the study of the linkage of regimes, the state, and education (Carnoy and Levin 1986; Carnoy and Samoff 1990). His most recent comparative study (Carnoy 1992), even though it examines the role of education more in economic than political terms, offers useful insights into the political realm. He asserts that understanding the state's role, albeit a bureaucratic one, is "part and parcel" of conceptualizing schools; assuming it away as an issue creates serious difficulties in interpreting educational policy analysis. States can, for example, systematically ignore certain groups in their implementation of policy. Likewise, as my study predicts, regimes can also systematically ignore groups. Both the state's economic and political proclivities should be carefully examined apart form the regime's. This is not an easy task. Carnoy suggests, for example, that state public education policies perform well only when (1) the state is not an expression of unequal class, race, and gender in the economic market, and (2) education policies smooth market relations and correct the market's worse excesses (Carnoy, 1992: p.159).

Richard Merritt and Fred Coombs (1977) assert that in most nations' decisions about public education, including those of reform, are significantly determined by the political, economic, and social arenas of the moment. R. Murray Thomas (1983) depicts the link between political regimes and education as symbiotic, wherein reciprocal factors of influence operate. The political influence on education concerns access, content, philosophy, morals, and economic opportunity. The educational influence on political regimes concerns political socialization, political legitimation, social integration, and social change (pp. 8-11; pp. 18-21). Laurence Iannaccone (1983) describes the politics-education
connection as a function of whether a regime chooses to politicize education or not; that is, whether to make education a creature of the regime of the moment or to leave it more bureaucratically independent and more subject to its own internal politics.

For a regime, the implications of the foregoing are that its education policies affect many facets of the society, which in turn generate public reactions to those policies. This suggests that education affects social change and, as a consequence, affects political development as well. Among the questions shaping strategies of regimes in the arena of public education are those of the degree of regime and state involvement in making education policy, and of the extent of participation by those outside the bureaucracy or the regime in the policy process. Scholarly evaluation of those strategies may offer insights into the effects of regime on policy, and on policy successes or failures. Further, regime effectiveness in policy performance seems likely to be associated with regime legitimacy; that is, right action may make might for the regime. As Heeger (1974) suggests, "At the heart of the crisis of legitimacy in the underdeveloped state is a crisis of political consolidation. The power to rule effectively remains elusive" (p. 135). Does effective rule contribute to political consolidation and thus to political development? Education policy seems a particularly fruitful arena within which to examine a regime's motives, its outputs, and subsequent outcomes for the population and in terms of regime legitimacy.

For Carlos Tunnerman (1984), the first Minister of Education after the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua,

The education system responds to the rhythm of political-economic transformations that emanate from the revolutionary philosophy, but does not generate them because its super structural condition does not permit it to do so. Similarly with development, it [education] is not a determining cause, but it can promote or retard it. (p. 1)
For Gerald Heeger (1974), regimes are still judged by their capacity to satisfy the hopes of the people (p. 135). Kenneth Karsten and Keith Rosen (1975) concur:

To the extent that the state must perform an organizing role, it must have the power to translate the decisions of its leaders into action by a large number of people. No government can govern effectively for any protracted period of time out of the "barrel of a gun." If government is to play an important role in the development process, masses of people must be willing to accept the government's commands just because they are the government's commands. (p. 659)

Bert Hoselitz (1965) has observed that the suspected political consequences of improvements in education by regimes have been largely unexplored. This oversight has occurred in part because scholars are more interested in the economic consequences of education policies than in education's political consequences. Second, the oversight magnifies the assumption that economic well being produces political well being, political consolidation, and legitimacy. There has been little research on how the effects of public education policies may motivate a population to support or to question its political system.

In the Nicaraguan case, Amove and Dewees (1992) suggest, for example, that the revolutionary government of the 1980's focused on public education to improve the standard of living of Nicaraguans and to reflect positively on the regime. Yet, "the materials and personnel limitations of popular education, including poorly trained teachers, may not be able to engage in Freirean type consciousness raising"\(^5\) (p. 175). Studies, however, have not been done to explore the effect of revolutionary education policy upon social conditions or upon the regime's legitimacy. In part this research lacuna remains because education and

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\(^{5}\) Paulo Freire, educational philosopher and scholar of Brazil, maintained that the educational experience should emphasize challenge and individualizing information which may stimulate independent thinking. The Nicaraguan revolutionary transition regime of Daniel Ortega supported Freire's pedagogical notions at least "in theory."
legitimacy are instruments of development that are difficult to measure in underdeveloped or non-democratic countries. Indeed, education data are often inaccessible or incorrect.

Arnone and Dewees further argue that between 1979 and 1989 "the contribution to the legitimation of the Sandinista government and the willingness of the part of specific populations to support the Frente Sandinista de Liberación National (FSLN), the primary party of the revolutionary victory, under conditions of economic hardship and external aggression is an area in need of investigation" (p. 179). Karsten and Rosen (1975) similarly emphasize that legitimacy is a state of mind, largely shared or not shared throughout the community. "Power can not be said to be legitimate when only scattered members of the community believe it to be so. Legitimacy, then is interlocked with issues of consensus and community, no less than with issues of security" (p. 652).

If education policies are partially responsible for helping to consolidate a regime's power and solidify legitimacy, one thing seems certain. Education systems in developing countries are not only instruments of power and a "foundation for authority" for the state, but also the mechanism through which the "government of the day" gets its authority. "Education systems do not operate in a vacuum, but are often a means to a political end by a regime" (Rowley, 1971: pp. 12-13). Michael Apple (1978) observes that education is both a cause and an effect as an active force capable of giving legitimacy to ideologies (p. 386).

In my study of the Nicaraguan case, several dynamics will be explored in an effort to answer several research questions. To what extent does the regime control the education policy process? What strategies does the regime employ to control the policies? And what are the political outcomes of these policies? My study demonstrates that in three Nicaraguan regimes, ideology -- whether right, left, or center -- has driven policy actions. For example, in order to politicize education (make it isomorphic to regime politics), a regime's
ideological posture will shape policy so as either to expand or restrict both the number of actors who can participate in the policy process and the resources for education. Further for a regime, the retention of power (control over the state) is a primary objective. As Walter (1993) argues

In any political system, someone (either an individual or a group) must wield supreme power, someone must make decisions, someone must represent the authority of the state. The problem, therefore, is not one of determining who wields power but in deciding in whose interest power is wielded. This question must be answered, of course, in terms of concrete, specific measures that the state takes and that benefit some groups in society more than others. (p. 236)

The transitions between regime types in states such as Nicaragua can be complex. Over a 26 year period Nicaragua experienced a shift from a praetorian/dynastic regime to one of a socialist government espousing the "logic of the majority," to one supporting a free market quasi-democratic system. Armove and Dewees (1992) note that:

In these processes of upheaval and transition, education both formal and non-formal, has been called upon to help consolidate successive centers of political power and to bring about a new and more desirable social order. Research has and can play an important role in illuminating the potential and limitations of education to contribute to political legitimation and to social change. (p. 182)

Nicaragua and Its Three Regimes

The remaining chapters in this study of Nicaraguan regimes from 1967 to 1993 and their public elementary and secondary education policies will examine strategies and results. I will speculate about the effect of those strategies upon regime legitimacy in the final chapter. Within each of the regimes in Nicaragua over the last 26 years there have been (1) a preponderance of elite influence over the masses, (2) significant influence by the financial
and political interests and actions of the United States, and (3) recognition that mass education may work against a regime's objectives.

C.D. Rowley (1971) emphasizes that education policies are a tool to mobilize people politically, and often nothing more. First, education policy expressed in curriculum may exacerbate national divisions, as in the highly political choice of a certain language for schools in a multilingual society. This particular issue -- language of instruction -- was a sore point and difficult problem to resolve for all three Nicaraguan regimes in the Atlantic coast region because of the various ethnic and language minorities there. Second, rivalries between classes, regions, and interests may be intensified when education resources are scarce or distributed inequitably. There is always the possibility that the elite may support a more centralized education policy if so-called democratic means of improving the education system fail (pp. 53-57). Rowley suggests that

The decisions in an education plan are political in nature and in their effects. They are decisions about who shall get how much of a limited resource and when. They affect the people in a "soft" area in human relations--the future of their children. (p. 57).

John Silvey (1982) has observed that "education can not be divorced from its larger political and social context" (p. 76). Joseph LaPolambara (1971) argues that "education can not remain a lumped residual variable, for it is clear that in nation building, elites faced with competing demands will, as a practical matter, have to make decisions about how, where, and how much of the national product will go into education" (p. 259). Ian Roxborough (1979) and Richard Higgott (1983) both agree that the distributive component of policy is political before it is economic, since political capacities may preclude desired levels of distribution. Such observations help confirm the argument that micro-level theory about
policy and its outcomes is more useful than "grand theory" at this juncture (Anderson and Windham, 1982).

Examining these three Nicaraguan regimes allows us to test the level of politicization of education through general national education policies and education finance. It also provides a point of departure for an effort to determine whether in Nicaraguan regime changes a trend emerges similar to its neighbors in the Latin American region. Lewin (1987), for instance, finds that for Latin America as a whole, from 1970-1982 growth rates for public expenditure on education as a percentage of gross national product went from 3.4 percent to 4.4 percent. The average in these twelve years was 3.8 percent. It will be interesting to examine whether and how Nicaragua may have followed or deviated from such larger regional trends.

Sylvain Lourie (1989), who has done extensive research on education planning in Central America, reminds us that:

> For the sociologist and the political scientist education is an instrument developed by man in order to help strengthen collective structures such as the State, the political regime, the social structure, the means of production, etc. This functionalist approach is basically concerned with an organism exercising one of several functions. (p. 30)

Any rethinking of political development theory for the 1990s must examine the rationales, maintenance, and change in regime performance. This case study of Nicaragua examines the state's education policies in an effort to track such performance.

Chapter two which follows offers a general assessment of regime strategies in education in the Latin American region and in Nicaragua. Chapter three sets the methodological path the study will take. Chapters four, five, and six examine the education policy strategies of the dynastic regime of Anastasio Somoza Debayle, 1967-1979; the
revolutionary era, 1979-1990; and the democratic-centrist regime of Violeta Chamorro, 1990-1993, respectively. Chapter seven presents a comparative perspective across all three eras to examine overall public education policy. Chapter eight offers conclusions.

In any education plan there lie political issues. Weeks (1977) states this reality as an ironic conundrum: "If education is the answer, what is the question?" In this study I hope to learn how and to what extent the education policies of Nicaragua have been politicized, and what have been the strategies of such politicization. Second, I hope to learn to what extent have the strategies differed among regimes. Whatever their ideological differences, all Nicaraguan policy makers, after all, have been significantly constrained by the small resource base of their nation, by its poverty, and its position in the international economic and political systems. The question here would be: To what extent have societal and international forces beyond policy makers' control shaped education policy? Finally, do the answers to the previous questions give us grounds from which to speculate as to how general education policies and spending affect the legitimacy of Nicaragua's regimes?
CHAPTER II

REGIME STRATEGIES AND EDUCATION:
NICARAGUA AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The structure, content, and funding of fundamental elementary and secondary education is a product of both politics and economics. The politics of development, which has absorbed the academic world since 1960, has focused on the economic side of this relationship. This chapter focuses upon the political side. It considers the relationship between regime type and education policy. It delineates general education policy from education finance policy for the developing world in general, and for Nicaragua in particular. General policy includes subcategories of policy actors, policy beneficiaries, legal mandates, ideological criteria, and structure of the system. Education finance policy includes such subcategories as the proportion of GDP devoted to education, state expenditures on education, total state expenditures versus state expenditures on education, and per capita spending on education.

Public education delivery systems in developing countries exhibit particular traits characteristic of both their regimes and their developing status. The strong hand of the regime and the state usually is manifest in controlling curricula and the limited resources available to education. Political instability — especially shifts in politics and regime types between military-civilian, nationalistic, one-party dominated, or fledgling democracy — can sharply affect education policies and processes. There are several reasons for this and many ways in which this might occur. First, fear of change and possible instability are often central concerns of those who control and shape public schooling, a primary socialization tool. Education, therefore, may be manipulated by a regime to protect the status quo. Second, the sometimes erratic performance of their economies can force rulers to make
difficult and even arbitrary allocations of scarce resources to education and other policy areas. Third, education policy can potentially alter class relations in a society. This may affect traditional economic and power relationships between elites and masses. Fourth, many Third World nations have experienced revolution, insurrection, rebellion, civil war and coups d'etat. Such turbulence can play havoc with the goals, operation, and funding of public education.

Thomas LaBelle and Christopher Ward (1990) offer some basic insights into the politics of education. They consider the developing countries of Algeria, China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Iran, Mozambique, and Nicaragua in their examination of regime change and education policy change. Their interest lies in the distribution of power over education in these societies before and after a regime transformation. They examine how education reform is used by the new regime to achieve its goals. Comparisons of this nature are useful since there has been relatively little research on how massive socio-political change affects the nature of education (p. 95).  

LaBelle and Ward chose six variables to measure educational change associated with regime change: control (centralization), access (limitations to entry), tracking (elite/mass educational paths), curricula (appropriateness), personnel (foreign or domestic sponsored), language of instruction, and type of transformation (coup, revolution, etc.) (pp. 97-100). Their supposition was simple: political transformations lead to shifts in each of these six variables which, they argue, comprise the heart of any education policy.

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6 Two exceptions, however, may be found in the work of Rolland Paulston (1972) on Cuba and Carl Templin (1983) on China. In Cuba and China, of course, a complete revolutionary upheaval had occurred.
They concluded the following: (1) All education reform is intertwined with political
decision making. (2) Education reform pronouncements may be used to promote other goals,
such as regime legitimacy. Education is a mechanism for maintenance of regime power, and
those who are highly educated play key roles in the selection of those who will have state
power to control education policy. It is no small wonder, then, that centralized control over
the education system is seldom challenged (p. 104). (3) Ideology and renewed nationalism
may affect curriculum changes. And, (4) governments are willing to allocate more resources
to educational objectives if they expect a payoff from the effort.

My interest in the study of Nicaragua is similar to that of LaBelle and Ward. I will
examine regime changes from 1967 through 1993 and the extent to which regime
transformations and the ideologies that shape these regimes may have influenced education
policies. The primary variables I measure are general education policies and the education
finance policies (public education spending) of these regimes. Nicaragua is particularly
interesting in that it experienced several marked regime transformations during this span of
years. The focus of my study, therefore, will be to explore the effects of regime change in
Nicaragua upon education policy, and the role of education in and for Nicaragua's successive
political regimes of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Any such examination of the policies
employed in Nicaraguan education over three regimes should elucidate (1) whether or not
there was expansion of political conflict over education; that is, an expansion of who got to
participate in the policy process, (2) who were the beneficiaries of education and why, and
(3) of the level of state financing of education. Whether consequences and changes in
education policy driven by regime change actually do increase regime legitimacy must
remain a topic for future study, but it will be discussed briefly in this chapter and several
others.
How Politics Affects Education

What does politics have to do with education and vice versa? C.D. Rowley (1971) suggests that a regime's authority to define education can be a source of power and obedience:

The education system in a developing country offers to some people, but not to others, a scarce resource of high value. It is also a means of mobilizing the villagers around the leadership of the central government—a process without which the new nation can not operate effectively as a modern state. (p. 12)

According to Rowley (1971), contradictions emerge in education policies as groups pressure government out of self interest rather than the national interest. For example, there are groups whose standard of living depends on education; there are special interests in education for teachers, religious groups, and linguistic and regional associations; and there are the groups most likely to be taxed, and the disgruntled with "axes to grind" (p. 17). Language of instruction has been a contentious issue in multilingual countries such as India, Canada, and Belgium, because language serves to isolate or to integrate a population. Competition between rural and urban populations for scarce school structures, teachers, and materials often takes a political tone and can become embedded in political party platforms. Further, one would be remiss not to examine the current external political and economic relationships affecting a developing nation (pp. 27-33). Rowley's discussion highlights the reciprocal influence of politics and education in that education can either aid or hinder political socialization and political integration for a particular regime.

What has prior research taught us about how politics and education are linked? Over the last 30 years there have been nominal changes in the study of the political effects on education. There is redundancy in much of the research before 1980. Some of the more useful efforts, however, include studies by Bert Hoselitz in James Coleman's *Education and...*

Hoselitz (1965) wanders virtually tangentially into the topic of the political implications of education policies, having begun from an economic perspective. He suggests that there are probable political consequences of education. Among these are the development of excess capacity of trained persons for whom jobs are not available, inequities between the education resources made available to elites and masses (i.e., how educational advantages tend to reinforce elites' power because they are educated); and the eradication of mass illiteracy that changes social communication and social integration (pp. 556-559). In each of these three possible consequences there are winners and losers, an outcome that may well not be conducive to building a national community. Education policy tradeoffs shift relationships between the rich and the poor, among ethnic groups, and among geographical regions. Hoselitz concludes that slow, deliberate change in primary education is preferable to education "crash programs" because slower change produces increased manpower and the chance for democracy. He assumes that educational planning is essential to the promotion of democracy in developing nations. Such a process to him is

the only program which may gradually produce increased political participation by the ordinary members of the rank and file and which draws, step by step, an ever increasing number of members of the developing nations into the circle of politically aware citizens... moreover, it is the only program which is likely to lead to political solutions compatible with a free and increasingly democratic society. (pp. 564-565)

Laurence Iannaccione (1983) links political regimes to educational change in a comparative study of the developing nations of China, Zaire, Nicaragua, Cameroon, Malaysia, and Jamaica. Each of these regimes had different strategies for education. Each also faced sharp, destabilizing internal divisions, whether ethnic, linguistic, socio-economic,
or religious. Each regime politicized education in one of two ways: either by forcing education policies to mirror the general politics of the regime, or by fostering "parallel accommodation," meaning accepting some differentiation in education policy to accommodate social cleavages. Iannaccione's results suggest that no matter what direction state policy takes, educational conflict will emerge, thus putting the regime and the state in a vulnerable position. Failure in policy weakens legitimacy, which in turn weakens the state (pp. 283-286).

In all cases, however, the state assumed a greater role in the direction of education while simultaneously increasing its risk should it fail to achieve particular goals. Nevertheless, in these six states when regimes were less secure, on less legitimate footing, or where the "cult of the personality" in leadership existed, education politics came to mirror the regime's politics. As a consequence, changes occurred with respect to who contributed to policies, who was served, and the amount of resources that were allocated (pp. 294-295).

Roger Garrett (1984) emphasized the geopolitical dimensions of education policy. He argued that education is a bridge between utility (the economy) and autonomy (the political system). Regimes in developing countries must realize that the revenue supplied to them by foreign donors affects internal policy goals and may also have to address the donor's own goals. Those governing elites should be mindful that education is not only a tool for productivity, "but also a source of human enrichment, emancipation, communicative ability, critical world view, and political sophistication" (p. 152). While education may not in and of itself allow the masses to overcome poverty, oppression, or inequities, it may make people more aware of those three problems and may provide tools to help citizens begin working to change them (p. 153).
In short, Garrett suggests that there are positive and negative political consequences of education. Investment and policy change in education may bring significant political risks for a regime. Garrett also argues that when elites lack the ability to satisfy most material and social needs, they "increasingly see the ability to satisfy popular demands for education as a necessary (though not always sufficient) condition for the political survival of the regime" (p. 153). Further, the precarious nature of legitimacy for developing countries suggests that it is politically good to invest in education, for its returns may help cement a fragile base of legitimacy for the state (p. 154).

Robert Arnowe and Anthony Dewees (1992) focus their research more directly on politics and education policy. Because education programs can foment fundamental social change, Arnowe and Dewees argue that micro-level studies of education and its effects, such as that by Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff (1990) are very useful. Those authors suggest that educational policy in Nicaragua during the revolutionary period and in the post revolutionary period has flowed from the different historical projects of contending social classes and their political organization. In order to understand the origins, ends, trajectory, and outcomes of education policy in Nicaragua, it is necessary to understand the complex interplay of historical, international, economic, political, and social [forces]. (p. 170)

Arnowe and Dewees also praise works that describe the dynamics of literacy in post revolutionary Mozambique. Such research about classroom interaction there provides insight into how the institutionalization of a society's power begins with children. Further, Arnowe and Dewees demonstrate that for Nicaragua, where historically oppressed groups such as indigenous peoples exist, the provision (or lack thereof) of education by the state is a key to full citizenship. In essence, where learning about their ethnic identity is a
possibility, a people would have a stake in the nation that legitimizes and protects their ethnic rights (p. 179).

Regime Type and Education Policies

Do particular types of regimes have corresponding educational strategies? Regimes in Third World countries are indeed likely to attempt to protect their power positions and the national interest through manipulating education policies. An examination of the education policy making process, therefore, may reveal much about the regime's ideology and intentions.

I distinguish between policy strategies that are **restrictive** and those that are **expansive**. In a restrictive policy strategy, as population rises both general education and education spending policies respectively would tend to limit or constrain (1) who is educated, (2) who contributes to policy, (3) decentralization of both curricula and the education system, (4) legal mandates for education, (5) the number of qualified teachers, (6) the provision of materials, classrooms, and buildings, and (7) state expenditures on education. In an expansive policy strategy, as population rises general education and education spending policies would either not limit or would seek to widen (1) who is educated, (2) who contributes to policy, (3) decentralization of both curricula and the education system, (4) legal mandates for education, (5) the number of qualified teachers, (6) the provision of materials, classrooms and buildings, and (7) state expenditures on education. Looking specifically at Nicaragua over time, I will compare the extent to which education policy strategies were either restrictive or expansive in orientation during the regimes or administrations of Anastasio Somoza Debayle (1967-1979), the Sandinista National Reconstruction Government (1979-1984), Daniel Ortega Saavedra (1984-1990), and Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, (1990-1996).
Regarding regime type and education policy, Szyliowicz (1973) asserts that it is instructive to determine what uniformities characterize education policies in different regimes and the degree to which systematic political changes affect education policy. For example in three developing countries -- Iran, Turkey, and Egypt -- between 1950 and 1970, each generally failed in the area of education. They produced badly prepared students, graduates with unmarketable skills, and poorly trained and motivated teachers, along with other unqualified school personnel. Interestingly, these three underdeveloped countries represented three different regime types and colonial perspectives. Egypt in particular, with a radical-revolutionary regime, used ideology more in a rhetorical sense (declaiming publicly about the importance of education), rather than actually expanding educational opportunities.

Can case studies of education policy provide useful insights into regime effects? Marie Jones (1982) finds in both between-country and within-country studies that

For education, as for any policy, the political context is important in so far as the relationships of power and authority condition which problems reach the public agenda, how solutions are sought and chosen, and how legitimacy and other resources are used to enforce decisions. (p. 28)

She analyzes the effects of education policies across developing countries with similar school investment and systems—particularly Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Through studying individual policies, one looks for an exercise of power that produces a policy that otherwise would not have happened (p. 29). If the state in question is centralized, policy decisions on education budgets, distribution of educational material, and enrollment levels may be challenged by teachers, parents, or students. Examining the successes or failures of these challenges is one way to measure the strength of the political authority's control over such actors or, conversely, the actors' influence upon policy.
Jones suggests that consensus about education reform is not necessarily achieved through revolution, particularly if there is not a comprehensive plan which allocates resources in equitable fashion. Furthermore, elites, if not suppressed, may still want assurances about educational opportunity for their class as do the lower socio-economic classes. In short, "there is a continuing need to enlist the cooperation from individuals throughout the society; eg. teachers, students, parents, and educational specialists who may not understand or accept the reforms" (p. 32).

Jones also argues that looking at one country or a small number of cases may produce better research results than small numbers of cases in several countries. Such studies are more likely to search for political effects where political choices exist. One should, in fact, look for elements to link schools to regional and ethnic distributions of classrooms and the extent of autonomy for schools. Such an approach generally seeks out controversy and debate as much as it does routine and consensus. Since most developing countries suffer from a scarcity of resources, centralized bureaucratic structures insensitive to policymaking are the norm. Revolutionary regimes typically inject two educational goals simultaneously: equality of access to education and integration of young people into the economy. However, under revolutionary scenarios, schools overall may not get a higher budget priority and no overhaul of the system may occur (p. 31). Jones ultimately concludes, however, that although the theoretical specification of political effects on education is relatively clear, actual evidence is more ambiguous.

William Platt (1965) distinguishes between policies towards education that are centrifugal and those that are centripetal. Centrifugal policies encourage allocation strategies that are decentralized, independent, and liberal. Centripetal policies promote efficiency, centralization, and investment. Platt agrees with other scholars that
(1) education is almost inevitably an accelerating or a perturbing force in society, as in its effects in the United States, the Soviet Union, the Philippines, Communist China; (2) educational institutions themselves wield power, as in university students in Latin America; (3) the instrumentalities and institutions for planning educational policies and budgets for carrying out such programs affect political development. Suffice it to say that education is far from inert politically. (p.569)

Underdeveloped societies must recognize these problems and their likely effects on education planning. Political regimes that do not address the political implications of planning and education may either accelerate political development too swiftly, or may impede its progress. Changes in regimes and corresponding social policy changes can generate legitimacy crises (Pye, 1971). Lucien Pye's observations help to characterize regime types and measure a regime's capability in policy performance. His four assumptions about legitimacy suggest an interesting framework from which to inspect the strategies of regimes toward education policies in developing countries. Put simply, the prescriptive consequences of an education policy can shape or contribute to the crises Pye identifies.

Some education strategies do take into account their implications for regime legitimacy. Rodney Barker (1990) argues that education may be used as one tool with which states cultivate their own legitimacy. He contends that as the state generates legitimacy, the process becomes a "language" providing both an opportunity for and a restraint upon those who enjoy it. States can promote their own legitimacy whether their structure is authoritarian

7 Lucien Pye lists four primary causes of legitimacy crises in developing countries: (1) government institutions falter because they can not resolve the conflicting perception that they have no legitimate base for authority; (2) government institutions may be unable to function because "institutional competition for power" exists; (3) leaders or divisions within the regime may fold because they can not justify their ideological claims on authority; and (4) the society has not been properly politically socialized and their attitudes are dysfunctional for the leadership (Cited in Binder, Coleman, et al, 1971: p. 138)
or democratic. Barker suggests that there are three general tactics for the creation and maintenance of legitimacy: rituals, propaganda, and education.

Barker asserts that a regime's education policies carried out by the state contain ideological tendencies that provide either a veneer for legitimacy or a realistic foundation for it. He also suggests that the relationship between education and legitimacy differs between the developed and the developing states. He argues that for the highly developed state external threats produce the only serious rationale for upgrading mass literacy. Such a policy serves to boost morale and develop support for the "cause." Developing countries, like Nicaragua, on the other hand, often are faced with both external and internal threats to stability. In this situation education policy may become a tool to legitimize a regime's actions as well as toward off both external and internal threats.8 Walter (1993) points out that

In order to instill the notion of legitimacy among a population, the state must keep a handle on the instruments of ideological control that reinforce the population's allegiance to the social and economic structure and the institutions of government; such instruments include the educational system, the communications media, and a religion or political ideology that provide the ultimate moral sanction for the state. (p. xv).

David Beetham (1991) argues that inadequacies in a regime's performance affect its legitimacy. Distributive policy is a particularly salient problem in this regard. Inequity is usually noted by all sectors demanding public goods. Beetham notes that often "there is no agreement on what such a standard [of equity] might be. The lack of agreement results in

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8 External threats refer to potential or real invasive action by a foreign power. Internal threats refer to the potential for elite reformation, elite alliances, or mass discontent that might perturb a regime's stability with a coup d'etat, an insurrection, a rebellion, or a revolution.
a potentially endless succession of demands on the state" (pp. 167-186). If the regime cannot perform to expectation through the institutions of the state, then public disappointment undermines legitimacy for the regime.

Revolutions may have difficulty promoting the equitable distribution of a public good like education. Beetham, for example, demonstrates that the Nicaraguan revolution sought to achieve both political restoration and societal transformation. In Nicaragua by the early 1990s it appeared that the 1979 revolution and its aftermath had helped to create general ballot box legitimacy. Basic "across the board common issues" such as grassroots education, however, were tackled to produce specific civic ideals associated with the revolution (p. 227). Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff (1990) suggest that a revolutionary movement, "even before it takes power, defines knowledge as including revolutionary consciousness" (p. 59).

Two recent works by Edward Lehman (1992) and Tri Q. Nguyen (1989) illustrate how important regime policy performance may be for legitimacy. Lehman, focusing on developed capitalist democracies, emphasizes the viability of regimes that, he claims, survive where there exist both state effectiveness (in policy performance) and inefficient popular participation (lack of response to the policy by the public). Understandably, policy performance is not the only measure of a regime's legitimacy, but developed countries generally have higher levels of legitimacy to provide slack that helps keep them viable. Such slack can help a regime affected by poor electoral turnout or popular dissatisfaction to survive. On the contrary, developing countries often have little such slack in their legitimacy levels. If for example, a new education policy mobilizes new groups and thus give them a new resource on which to build a power base, such changes could easily undermine the incumbent regime's legitimacy.
For Third World countries like Nicaragua, legitimacy may be quite fragile. Under such circumstances, performance in the making and implementing of policy becomes especially important for regime legitimacy. As Joseph LaPalombara (1971) reminds us, a basic difference between developed and developing nations is the extent to which legitimacy can be altered by public policy: "Demands for distribution and redistribution in such [developing] nations places the nation's survival in a state of jeopardy and raises questions about the appropriate mix of equality, differentiation, and capacity" (p. 278). Thus, a developing nation may not withstand a policy change if that change directly affects national identity or regime legitimacy.

Education Policies: External Actors and Events

What role do foreign or external actors play in the matter of regimes and education policy? Tri Q. Nguyen's (1989) work is relevant regarding the effects of the United States' inconsistent financial support to Nicaragua. He discusses how Third World social service strategies may be adversely affected by social and economic aid given by foreign donors. He argues that foreign assistance hampers rather than fosters legitimacy in recipient countries, and that legitimacy crises and developmental failure in the Third World typically stem from a mix of a weak state, ill conceived foreign aid, and the inability of the regime to prevent social or cultural fragmentation. He examines both the political and economic repercussions of foreign assistance.

With foreign aid as an exogenous variable for the developing country, Nguyen's premise is that low levels of regime legitimacy restrict rather than improve political development as foreign aid introduced new imported norms. All groups in the society become culturally confused, and identity crises in the society parallel the legitimacy crises of the regimes. Therefore, to maintain stability and order, the regime has to increase its use
of coercion. Third World regimes are particularly vulnerable to outside political influences. For instance, United States' social and economic aid to Nicaragua has been a persistently erratic throughout the last quarter century. Most dramatic in this regard was the period between 1983 and 1990, when the administrations of Ronald Reagan and George Bush supported the anti-Sandinista Contras rather than the revolutionary regime. The withdrawal of Agency for International Development (AID) monies from the Nicaraguan government and the U.S. provision of support to the Contras during that era forced Nicaragua drastically to reallocate public spending away from social policy to the military.

Education-related foreign aid may also have less dramatic effects. Martin McLean (1981) notes that "it is clear that the achievement of change through foreign aid depends on political conditions which vary between countries, and that national governments are best placed to decide and to achieve what is politically feasible" (p. 162). In the case of Nicaraguan development, financial contributions for education from the United States have had a self serving goal. The style of the textbooks, for example, had a clear "U.S. stamp" on them.

For a Third World country, a dearth of resources puts its regime and the state in a vulnerable position. If providing public goods is central to legitimacy and the regime's inability to do this becomes institutionalized, resource scarcity constitutes a serious liability for the regime and the state. Roger Garrett (1984) observes that the connection between educational assistance and legitimacy thus pervades the distribution of education funds and programs (p. 154).

John Silvey (1982) reports that international lending agencies such as the World Bank have moved toward a "basic needs" approach toward loans to support educational development. International lenders ask probing questions about the intended use of the
loans, such as who is going to be educated, for what reasons, and at whose ultimate expense. In fact, careful examination of the investment in education and the results of education spending have become central to both lending agencies and countries. The levels of school dropouts, the shortages of staff, and the ratio of teachers to students have become primary determinants of aid. Ministers of Education in Third World countries, faced with answering these agencies' questions, have experienced opposition from a variety of groups in their own countries. This has led Silvey to conclude that

> Education systems have been irrelevant to the needs of the developing countries during the last two decades because education policies were often keeping company with overall development strategies which were themselves irrelevant to the societies and the conditions of the developing countries. (p.90)

Silvey suggests that the real educational needs of a country are often the "stepchild" of national politics. Such an arrangement produces dysfunctional education policies.

The regime changes in Nicaragua examined in my study will highlight the risky nature of education policy for states in transition. Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff (1990) claim that such states as prerevolutionary Nicaragua's Somoza regime have "conditioned capitalism," which includes either squandering monies on social policies or, by allowing a bureaucratic agency to practice political patronage, results in inefficiency and corruption. Purportedly such practices force a Minister of Education to grapple with what is usually the largest group of state employees, the teachers:

> Equalizing, incorporating and politically legitimizing the expansion of formal and nonformal education in a transition society does not settle the conflict between those who want to democratize knowledge and power and those who want to reproduce the knowledge and power structure. On the one side are those who develop concrete, productive skills that include political consciousness. On the other side are those
who define skill and knowledge devoid of political consciousness (p.84)

These same authors succinctly present the basic education dilemma for states in transition. It is better for a regime to create long term political consciousness contributing to a lasting legitimacy than it is to promote a temporary situation consisting of supplying inadequate or dead end educational skills. However, in revolutionary states like Nicaragua legitimacy may depend on an immediate ability to provide such social services as education. The process and the success of that effort could influence the nature of the short or long term legitimacy that ensues. A regime, therefore, must be clear about the political value of education policies because education is double edged. The regime and the elites may win points for providing education, but the masses may well use the tools acquired through education to rid themselves eventually of the regime.

The Latin American Setting:
Regimes, Education Policy and Its Consequences

Are there traits of Latin American societies that provide special conditions for the study of regimes and education policy? Several scholars suggest that this may be true.

In Latin America, authoritarian regimes in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, have had centralized planning for education. One objective of such centralization was to promote national economic goals. Therefore, economic and educational goals were usually linked, and what some view as "internal colonialism" became apparent in education policies. Access to education was unbalanced.

In 1970, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua experienced 40% absenteeism in public schools. But this information is insufficient for "assessing a child's chances of taking part in a compulsory and minimum education. The rural child is even less fortunate. Only one-third of rural enrolled children had the chance of urban children in 1979. The situation that
emerges is clear. The school system does not take all children entitled to schooling. (Lourie, 1989: p. 36)

This observation leads one to examine what factors shape public policy in Latin American countries.

Richard Morse (1974) describes succinctly the context of public policymaking in Latin America. He advances several propositions about elites, their influence over policy, and the consequences of these phenomena for the regime. First, elites attain their status because they possess some critical resource. Power is a function of resources. Second, he argues that in Latin America, "rule of men" outstrips "rule of law." This produces inconsistency in policy, institutionalizing instability and retarding legitimacy. Third, Latin America is corporatist. Therefore the political systems are composed of parts that relate through a patrimonial and symbolic center rather than directly to one another. Consequently, legitimacy is a function of how elites manage resources and policies in order to control the mass population.

Charles Anderson (1974) argues further that since power relationships in Latin America are ratified in terms of power capability, the kind of elite negotiations that occur determine how policies reinforce or negate the regime. Gary Wynia (1984) argues that critical political changes in Latin America occur during periods when shifts in a regime's policies affect elite/mass relations.

These theories are useful when examining education policy in Nicaragua specifically. Education is a resource for power. Based on these theories, one would expect that elites control education policy in a corporatist manner. In Nicaragua, however, there seems to have emerged a pattern of rise and decline of particular personalities within certain
Arturo Cruz Jr. (1987), in a critique of Peter Davis' One Hundred Years of Turpitude: Where is Nicaragua?, describes this historical elite pattern and contends that in Nicaragua one sees a continuation of generations of elites in the same families dating as far back as 200 years.

Nicaragua is a country of families all of whom know one another or at least all about one another. There are "old" families who can trace their roots back to the colony (the Sacasas, the Chamorros, the Cuadras) and the "new" ones (the Reyes, the Somozas, the Ortegas). A last name tells much about a person, especially if it is one of the more distinguished historical names. Consider the Chamorros, a family that like the Jesuits, is found on both sides of the Nicaraguan conflict. (New Republic 1987: p. 26)

To that end, he suggests that the state of Nicaragua still lives in the wake of the authoritarian Somozas (1934-1979) even though the last 40 years have exhibited social, class, and economic earthquakes. Whether Contra, Sandinista, or Somocista, the old way of caudillo politics is still very present. As a consequence, elite behaviors often justify themselves under the premise that what is "right" politically is founded in a moral "right" and so they act as they see fit towards the masses.

Both the general education policy and the education finance policy of Nicaraguan regimes may tell us much about urban elite/mass relations and rural elite/mass relations. The extent to which all socio-economic classes receive education affects both the level of social integration among classes and mobilization of the masses into the larger society. Elites supporting a restrictive education strategy may have directed the policy more for the "selective" good than the "collective" good. Robert Putnam (1976) observes that intra elite conflicts lend themselves to such an outcome, so that the extraction of taxes and services to
provide services to non-elites does not necessarily mean that elites are mobilizing the masses for a collective good (p. 163). Thus, the provision of education for the masses may well be intended for a particular narrow benefit for a ruling elite.

Despite the widespread agreement elite politics profoundly shapes education policy, the precise ways in which this occurs remain difficult to establish. Jones (1982) believes that although previous studies suggest that "ideology, distributions of power, and organization influence education policy independently, the how, where, and why they do are tantalizing questions yet to be settled" (p. 43). Nicaragua from 1967 and 1993 provides a good contemporary example of a developing country experiencing regime change, education policy change, and regime legitimacy problems. As such, the Nicaraguan case provides a particularly useful case for examining such linkages.

The central question I seek to answer in the chapters that follow is whether the political strategies for education exhibited restrictive or expansive strategies for policies in these three regimes. Daniel Levy (1981) has done the primary study on a similar proposition. He writes extensively about regime type and higher education policies. He asserts that regime investment in higher education typically includes policies that are either (a) rational, exclusive, and coercive, or (b) politicized, inclusive, and tolerant (pp. 31-52). Respectively, these two policy stances refer to the degree of regime and state control over higher education, access to higher education, and freedom of educational expression within the higher education institutions. His book concerns higher education policy in Latin America and examines certain patterns of regime action. My study resembles his, but addresses the elementary and secondary levels of education in Nicaragua.
The Nicaraguan Case

This study examines the relationship between regime type and policy change. I define regime type by its dominant ideology and by the methods by which it acquired and kept power. The regimes I will examine in Nicaragua range from rightist to centrist/democratic to leftist in nature.

First, the right wing regime of Anastasio Somoza Debayle developed out of the rule of his father and brother, which spanned from 1934 through 1967. Like his father and brother before him, Anastasio Somoza Debayle at first ruled as a central figure who controlled the military, co-opted the business elite, and personally dominated social public policy. However, within a few years of assuming power he lost the ability or the will to maintain his predecessors' tactics. He soon developed his own style of rule marked by a high degree of personal attention to social policy. He gained and kept authority through fraudulent elections and coercive military repression.

The second regime was that of the Sandinistas. It was leftist in nature. In its first manifestation the revolutionary government was under the leadership of the FSLN's National Directorate (the party's leadership board) and the state executive's Governing Junta of National Reconstruction (Junta de Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional -- JGRN) (1979-1984). Subsequently the revolutionary government consisted of the elected administration led by Daniel Ortega Saavedra (1984-1990). During both periods the revolutionary governments promoted egalitarian social goals and human liberation. The first revolutionary government won power by overthrowing the Somoza regime in July of 1979. The Ortega administration came to power through the 1984 election. Education policy was a central egalitarian symbol and policy concern for the revolution.
The third regime is the post-revolutionary democratic-centrist regime of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (1990-96). This government retained some of its predecessor's policies and personnel (mainly in the armed forces), unlike the Sandinistas. After defeating the FSLN in 1990 with 55 percent of the vote, Chamorro established an administration that chose two key policy areas in which to differentiate itself from the Sandinistas: public education policy and the goal of balancing executive and legislative institutional powers. In education this resulted in the injection into educational policy debates of questions of morality, the importance of the church, and local control of schools.

In this study, I hypothesize that the more right wing Somoza regime would have designated the state as the primary education policy actor, centralized education and education policy making, and exhibited a restrictive policy strategy characterized by narrow access to education and education planning, limited benefits of education, and limited public financial support. (2) I hypothesize that the more leftist Sandinista revolutionary administrations will have designated the state as a major policy actor, but will have decentralized education, and exhibited an expansive policy strategy characterized by opening to new groups access to education and education planning, increased benefits of education, and expanded public financial support. And, (3) I hypothesize that the more democratic-centrist Chamorro regime will have designated the state as a secondary player in education policy emphasizing the role of the private sector and the local communities, and will have exhibited a mix of both restrictive and expansive policy strategies characterized by broad access to education and sharing education planning with localities, the increase in the beneficiaries of education, and spending on education superior to that of Somoza but inferior to that of the Sandinistas.

Chapter III addresses the specific hypotheses and methodological framework for the subsequent analysis.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This study examines the relationship between regime type, regime education policy, and regime change. The independent variable is regime type, and the grouped dependent variables are general education policy and education finance policy. The term "politicization" as used in this study refines ideological orientation, the primary definition of regime type. This comparative study covering from 1967-1993 examines three Nicaraguan regimes.

This study of three Nicaraguan regimes and their respective education policies employs a comparative micro-historical approach. This technique examines the encounters of individuals, groups, and institutions with large socio-political structures and processes. Tilly (1984) refers to this approach as one which considers structures and relationships among persons and groups. Processes are the transformations of human interactions comprising such relationships. In the case of Nicaragua, 1967-1993, the structures, processes, and interactions of interest include the ideological type of regimes and their public education policies. A study of these interactions and the variation in education policies permits an evaluation of whether regime change brings policy change and how ideology affects both regime and policy.

My study tracks the change between particular governments (regimes) with particular respect to the politics of education. I seek to discover whether the regime manipulates education education in order to expand or restrict its impact on the political development of the country. I speculate about, but do not analyze, the relationship between regimes' education policies and their effects on regime legitimacy. Each of these three regimes,
though ideologically distinctive and possessing different policy processes, is set in a similar socio-economic, geopolitical environment -- Nicaraguan society. Economic factors, of course, do change over time, but the contextual constraints on the Nicaraguan economy remain relatively stable.

Research Strategy

Scholars generally agree that there is a hierarchy of order in comparative research. The experimental method is the most useful, followed by the statistical method and the comparative method. Each approach, however, has recognized value. Robert Jackman (1985) argues that the logic of the comparative method is the same as the statistical method. He observes that in statistical analyses not all relevant controls can be accounted for and the results thus become approximations. Further, the comparative method uses a smaller number of cases and more variables, but the results can be just as useful.

For that reason this study qualifies as a "most similar systems" comparative approach. Adam Prezeworski and Henry Teune refer to this approach as one of concomitant variation. It seeks to eliminate competing explanations of variables, allowing one to identify relevant systemic factors and to find the incidence of variability in the dependent variables (Frendreis, 1983: p. 264). In this case, the main relevant systemic factor is regime ideology; the dependent variables are the education policies. Arend Lijphart (1971) observes that the "most similar systems" approach can be improved by considering intra-nation studies because one can benefit from the identity of many national characteristics serving as controls.

Some of the national characteristics common to Nicaragua during the regimes of Anastasio Somoza DeBayle (1967-1979), the Sandinista Government of National Reconstruction (1979-1984), the Sandinista administration of Daniel Ortega Saavedra (1984-
1990), and the regime of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (1990-present) include a dependent economy; inequity among economic classes in levels of income, ownership of and access to land, and influence upon national policymaking; fluctuations of United States aid; ethnic tensions between the ladino (hispanic) majority and Atlantic zone indigenous peoples; and inequities between rural and urban areas of the country.

Although one might be tempted to argue that regime changes cause policy changes, it is important to proceed with caution. In the causal approach, the scholar assesses whether the dynamics of change within each case plausibly reflect the same causal pattern suggested by the broader appraisal of the case in relation to other cases (Rustow and Erickson, 1991: p. 23). Jackman (1985) cautions that causation can not be empirically demonstrated. What one achieves is causal inference. The ability to prove a causal pattern is typically limited by the inability to control for all factors even in statistical analysis, so what one examines is implications of theory rather than testing a theory. As such, Jackman argues that the language of theory and the reality of research are quite different (p. 172). Thinking in terms of a causal process, however, may help identify the path of inference between variables.

The Premises of This Study

Political development theory presumes that public education is a requisite for national development. The provision of public education is a key function of the state. Important traits of the state are defined by the ideology the regime in power. My study suggests that a primary independent variable (regime type) establishes particular strategies for public education policies. These strategies include two categories of dependent variables: general education policy and education finance. Historical experience suggests that certain elements may drive typical rightist, leftist and center/democratic regimes' approaches to public education. Those elements related to ideology include the personal
control of policy by the leader or group in power, bureaucratic control of policy by a political party, and more local control of the policy. This study seeks to determine, among other things, whether these three Nicaraguan regimes are ideologically typical or atypical in their public education policies. That is, do right-wing governments typically view education as a public good that must be tightly controlled by the regime for the good of the state? Do left-wing governments typically view education as necessary for the regime's survival, but hold that the provision of education must be guarded and tightly controlled? Do democratic governments typically view education as a right and a necessity for an informed citizenry to exercise its political power?

The political ramifications of education for elementary and secondary school children involve several political aspects including but not limited to the following: (1) the acquisition of knowledge, orientations, and attitudes about authority, power, political objects, and political events; (2) the costs and benefits of literacy, because as one learns to read, think, and comprehend, such skills cannot be as easily reversed; and (3) the cumulative political effects of citizen's increased knowledge on a society's political behavior. There may indeed arise important political consequences from these effects of education -- consequences for the regime, for the state, and potentially for the legitimacy of each.

R. Murray Thomas (1983) describes regime influence on education policy as an interaction of punishments and rewards. Rewards by regimes mean policies that provide more revenue, more teachers, more programs, more materials devoted to public education. Punishments by regimes mean the opposite--less revenue, fewer teachers, fewer programs and less materials devoted to public education. (pp.27-29). Iannaccone (1983) argues that in a state in which the governing regime is very insecure, and where the personality of the leader is dominant, education tends to be fully isomorphic to the regime. The term
"isomorphic" as Iannaccone employs it, refers to the identity of the political goals and the educational goals of the regime. Thus, high isomorphism would imply heavy regime control of education, and low isomorphism would mean little regime control of education. That is, the regime feels compelled to retain its own power through education policies that mirror its politics and ideologies. On the contrary, the stronger the legitimacy of the regime, the sharper will be the institutional separation between the state and education politics per se (254). Iannaccone, for example, found that Nicaragua and Zaire exhibited the strongest isomorphic tendencies between the state and education, while Cameroon, Malaysia, and Jamaica exhibited somewhat less isomorphic tendencies.

The Expectations of This Study

This is a study of how education policy is politicized; that is, how the state and the various regimes that control it manage education through a restrictive policy mode or through an expansive policy mode. I expect that among the most obvious elements under the dynastic authoritarianism of Somoza (1967-1979) there will have been restrictive, personal, exclusive control. I expect that in the revolutionary Sandinista regime (1979-1984) and the Ortega administration (1984-1990) there will have been an expansive, less personal, and inclusive control. Finally, I expect that the democratic-centrist administration of Chamorro (1990-1996) will have manifested a mixture of both restrictive and expansive policy modes. (Chamorro's term has not expired as of this writing; I will cover events through 1993.)

I vary from Laurence Iannaccone's (1983) use of the term politicization to specify my dependent variables. To him, "politicization [of education] is the expansion of the scale, intensity, and scope of political conflicts between regimes and their societies" concerning education (p. 275). The scale of conflict refers to the number and kinds of groups, persons,
and organizations involved in the education policy process. The intensity of the conflict refers to the state's commitment of resources (time, money, energy, personnel, and materials to education). The scope of the conflict refers to the questions, issues, and concerns about education previously considered apolitical that become political and a part of the parameters of public policy.

Defining the Variables

REGIME TYPE, the independent variable, refers to the ideology exhibited by the executive and the political institutions, the method through which the regime attained its power and the mechanisms for the maintenance of that power. Nicaragua's regime types are rightist-personalistic-oligarchical rule attained and maintained through coercion and cooptation (the Somoza regime), leftist bureaucratic-Sandinista (FSLN) dominance attained by revolution but maintained through popular election, and Violeta Barrios de Chamorro's more competitive democratic-centrist rule. This last regime attained and maintained its power through free popular election.

POLITICIZATION refers to the extent of expanding or restricting control that a regime exhibits in its general education and education finance policies.

GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY, a group of dependent variables, includes such measures as the state's legal requirements and provisions for education, the types and numbers of actors included in the education policy process (e.g., teachers, parents, unions, and the beneficiaries of education), which urban or rural elites or urban or rural masses gain access to the system, and the degree of centralization of the system. These variables can be employed to demonstrate a regime's efforts to expand or restrict the education of the society.

EDUCATION FINANCE POLICY, the second group of dependent variables, includes such measures as the percent of gross domestic product spent on public education, the percent of total government budget expended on public education, the per capita expenditure
on public education, and the type and amount United States Agency for International Development (AID) monies contributed to Nicaraguan education. Those data will be examined along with figures on actual public school enrollment, school age cohorts of children not in school, and numbers of teachers. These figures will be examined relative to the absolute figures of the general population, the gross domestic product, and overall government expenditure on all public services.

The political consequences of both of these policy areas for the legitimacy of the regime will be speculated about and considered as a future area of research in the final chapter of this study, but will not be a direct part of this analysis.

The expected regime policy stances in education would be as follows. Figure 1.1 indicates the expected policy control which I expect for the Nicaraguan regimes. Policy is either expansive or restrictive. The downward direction for the arrows for general education policy represents a restrictive policy control; upward-oriented arrows denote expansive policy control. The downward direction of the arrows for education finance represents a policy that limits monetary support, enrollments, teachers, and materials, while the upward arrows represent a policy control that expands monetary support, enrollments, teachers, and materials. The presence of both up and down arrows represents a policy control that has both restrictive and expansive elements.

FIGURE 1.1
NICARAGUAN REGIME EDUCATION POLICY MODES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regime</th>
<th>General Education</th>
<th>Education Finance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somoza</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandinistas</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamorro</td>
<td>↓↑</td>
<td>↓↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Hypotheses

The ideological orientation of these regimes will drive the following hypotheses:

H1: The rightist regime of Somoza politicized education through restrictive policies limiting both its general and education finance policies.

H2: The leftist regimes of the Sandinista's revolutionary junta and then of the Ortega administration, politicized education through expansive policies.

H3: The democratic-centrist regime of Chamorro politicized education policy through a mixed mode, both expanding certain aspects and restricting others in its general and education finance policies.

Chapters four, five, and six of this study focus respectively on the separate findings concerning these proposed hypotheses about these Nicaraguan regimes. Chapter seven considers the pattern of variation across time of both the general education policy and education spending of these regimes, as well as some basic questions central to this study: (1) Did education policies vary with regime type? (2) Did the regimes employ these different politicization strategies? It also considers speculatively this question: (1) Did the strategies have political consequences for the regime's legitimacy? Chapter eight offers some conclusions.
CHAPTER IV

DYNASTIC AUTHORTARIANISM AND PUBLIC EDUCATION:
ANASTASIO SOMOZA DEBAYLE, 1967-1979

The public record of Somoza Debayle on elementary and secondary education policies was a continuation of the record of family interest that by default would be treated as if it were also the national interest. The massive earthquake that devastated Managua midway through his regime in 1972 provided an opportunity for a more dynamic, expansive education policy, but the effort actually made was largely superficial. This chapter examines the regime's politicization of education. It describes the ideology of the regime as a driving force in its general education and education finance policies.

The Regime:
Ideology and the Context of Public Policy

By most accounts, the ideological orientation of this last of the Somoza regimes was ultra conservative, anti-Communist, paternalistic, nationalistic, and included a sycophantic relationship with the United States. As the third ruler in a 43 year dynasty, preceded by his brother Luis (1956-1967) and his father Anastasio Somoza Garcia (1936-1956), this last Somoza was the most politically, economically, and socially corrupt of the three. From a public policy perspective, all directives towards the betterment of the society were first for the betterment of the Somoza family (Walker, 1981, 1985; Booth, 1985; Millett, 1977; Diederich, 1981; Close, 1985). Influence over public policy was the bailiwick of such elites as the National Guard, foreign investors, the business bourgeoisie, or the Nicaraguan upper class. With the approval of Somoza, these were the primary participants in and beneficiaries of the regime's ministries. In the Ministry of Education Anastasio Somoza Debayle
"effectively made all decisions concerning tenure, salary, appointments, dismissals, curricula, textbooks, placement of schools, and examinations," even though international agencies and educators were consulted and even though a teacher's union existed (Kraft, 1983: p. 86).

Martín Carnoy and Carlos Torres (1990) describe the regime's education policy making. They note that Somoza Debayle paid less attention to maintaining a thin veneer of concern for public well being than had his brother or father. Their operative policies had been based on doing whatever it took for personal survival and self-enrichment. Carnoy and Torres suggest that

Under the Somozas, the Nicaraguan capitalist state was oriented primarily to maximizing the economic return of the Somozas and their friends. Rather than seeking any widespread legitimacy through public sector projects, the Somozas used their monopoly over the repressive apparatus--in the form of the National Guard trained in the United States--to terrorize and control the population. (Torres, 1990: p. 81)

The paternalistic and capricious attitude with which the third Somoza handled public monies in general was particularly notable in a speech at Matagalpa in November, 1968. He lashed out at the Nicaraguan bureaucracy, calling the 21,000 employees indolent and wasteful delinquents. He charged that they defrauded the Nicaraguan society through their financial errors and poor judgement. The harangue concerned PLAN PROLACSA, a multimillion dollar project designed to raise milk production. It would have constructed roads to bring milk to a dairy and would also have created a sizable Nestle factory producing chocolate for the whole of Central America.

Somoza argued that the government engineers, instead of planning "just roads" to transport milk, were planning main roads and superhighways, wasting three million dollars. Somoza scrapped the plan and fired Arnoldo Ramirez, the Minister of the Economy (Latin
American Newsletter, Ltd., 1968: p. 397). This display demonstrated both the regime's control of policy and the attitude about potential long term public benefits in transportation that might indirectly affect education. In that same speech, as a public gesture, Somoza allegedly demanded that four million dollars be transferred from the agriculture ministry to the education ministry but, typically, did so with no specific target program enumerated.

However hostile Somoza may have been toward this bastion of "indolents" (his term for the Nicaraguan bureaucracy) government employment grew measurably after 1968 -- especially in agencies dealing with social policy. Employees were added to the payroll to help defuse anger from the middle and lower classes who were excluded from a proportionate distribution of public goods. Somoza perceived that public anger might translate itself into a threat to his dictatorship. Having expanded the public payroll he could then point to all the personnel working on education, health, and social matters. He had also possibly coopted potential critics and opponents with public sector jobs. Further, expanding the bureaucracy would also be a way to implement superficially the financial aid for social programs that was being received from the United States under the Alliance for Progress (Booth, 1985: pp. 85-88).

This strategy of erecting an inclusivist veneer for the masses' apparent welfare may also be seen in policy results. In 1974, the physical quality of life in Nicaragua in terms of infant mortality, literacy, and life expectancy was the next to lowest in Central America. In 1977, the percentage of the Somoza regime's expenditures on education, approximately 13 percent, was the lowest in the region. Figures for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras respectively at about the same time were 31.8 percent, 22.2 percent, 16.7 percent, and 20.3 percent (UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1977, pp. 527-530).
Some blame for the relative paucity of education spending rests with the devastating 1972 earthquake that leveled parts of the capital city of Managua. The cost of rebuilding the city required the diversion of funds from education and other budgets. Somoza, calling the earthquake a "revolution of possibilities," decreed himself in charge of the reconstruction of the city's homes, schools, streets, and business properties. He personally administered all the international loans and United States aid earmarked for reconstruction. In this capacity, however, he directed the funds either to his family or "family approved" companies so that he could garner personal benefits from the reconstruction. His personal worth grew to 400 million dollars by the mid 1970s (Booth, 1985: pp. 81-86).

Anastasio Somoza Debayle's rapid expansion of his personal power within the system fostered a curious form of unease among Nicaraguan bourgeois, business, and political party elites. Their exclusion from benefits from the reconstruction contracts and capital benefits and Somoza's encroachment on their economic turf generated an increasing concern about Somoza's rule. However, the economic elite's dissatisfaction with Somoza did not mean they disliked the regime's per se. Members of the Nicaraguan Development Institute (INDE) and the Higher Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), for example, were angrier about Somoza's failure to spread around the benefits to be made from loans and public contracts than they were about the regime's general policies or its corruption. "One INDE spokesman made a typical comment in September, 1978: 'The problem is the man. He's taken away our market. We have no quarrel with anyone else or the system. Just get rid of him" (Black, 1981: p. 64).

Approximately 20,000 people died in this earthquake; 75 percent of the city's housing and 90 percent of its commercial property were destroyed beyond repair. The damage was conservatively estimated by the United Nations at 772 million dollars. The importance of the earthquake as a pivotal moment in the disintegration of Somocismo can hardly be overstated (Black, 1981: p. 59).
The relationship among Somoza, political party officials, and voters was already collusive and corrupt well before the 1972 earthquake. A long-maintained facade of a two-party system collapsed after the 1971 presidential elections. The ruling Liberal Party (PLN) and the "purchased" elite of the collaborationist Democratic Conservative Party (PCD) were the primary players. The "rubber stamp opposition always seemed more interested in patronage than in political service" (Diederich, 1981: p. 98). Somoza and the PLN guaranteed the PCD 40 percent of public offices through a constitutional revision and reserved a certain number of seats for the PCD in the Congress when allegations surfaced of a fraudulent electoral process (Booth, 1985: p. 90; 1988: p. 88). George Black (1981) argues that nearly identical measures were used to assure Somoza's re-election in 1974 (p. 58).

As the 1974 presidential election approached, Somoza spouted campaign rhetoric about liberty, progress, and democracy and the value of the Conservative Party as the "opposing" side. He was aware, at that moment, that the "Twenty Seven" -- a group of leftists, rightists, moderates, and union members -- all with an aversion to him, had begun organizing. The 1974 election became known as the "guaro and nacatamal exercise" where voters were given a meager meal, loose change, and rum to vote for Somoza. With 40 percent of the electorate abstaining, Somoza received 748,985 of the 815,758 votes cast in a race with the Conservative candidate, Dr. Edmundo Paguaga Irias (Diederich, 1981: p. 102). The government's version of the results was that 70 percent of the electorate voted out of a possible 1,150,000 eligible and registered voters.

It's hard to believe that in a country of two million, that many were inscribed, a U.S. embassy official commented privately after the election. Besides those who were coerced into voting--and some had no choice--children were allowed to vote. Many twelve year olds were seen showing off fingers red with ink from polling station controllers. (Diederich, 1981: p. 102)
The disjuncture between the public rhetoric of progress and the private face of Somocista greed and corruption became increasingly evident after the 1972 earthquake and the 1974 election. Myriad sectors of the society became increasingly concerned about and critical of the regime over the next five years. Opposition to Somoza's exclusivist, elitist operation, according to the Catholic Institute for International Relations (1987), grew into a three pronged phalanx orchestrated by the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN). "Brutality by the National Guard in the northern portions Nicaragua divided opinion against the regime. The traditional bourgeois opposed it and the Catholic Church lost patience with Somoza and joined the opposition movement" (p. 29). The mixture of elite and non elite groups eventually converged into a broad opposition movement including civic groups, major economic actors, and radical armed regime opponents such as the FSLN. The movement gave growing testimony to the capricious neglect of the common welfare by the Somoza regime. The opposition movement grew so dramatically that it would culminate in a broadly based revolution in 1979.

In a January 1978 interview with opposition union leader Rafael Córdoba Ríos, successor to Pedro Joaquin Chamorro as President of the Democratic Liberation Union (UDEL), Córdoba suggested that the Somoza regime could not reform itself to be democratic. "One can not ask the Devil to reform Hell—in this country there have been genocides since the time of Sandino's death (1935) when 1,800 persons died. There is now another genocide in Nicaragua such as the Pancasán episode of some three years ago, in which professionals, students, and others died" (FBIS, January 16, 1978: p.11). In a state of siege broadcast a little over a year later, Somoza's Public Education Minister and others signed a decree, declaring that the Marxist threat sought to transform the political, social, and economic principles that had served as a "basis of this state's democratic institution" (FBIS, June 8, 1979: pp. 4-5).
This anti-Marxist/anti-Communist orientation of Somoza was encouraged and partly financed by the United States and its ambassadors to Nicaragua such as Turner Shelton and James Theberge. Nixon appointee Shelton ingratiated himself with Somoza sufficiently to have his picture printed on the 20,000 córdoba note. Theberge, President Ford's emissary, proved less egotistical, but was still a right wing writer of anti-Communist rhetoric (Black, 1981: p. 57). Using to his advantage the historically dominant role of the United States over Nicaragua, Somoza took advantage of what he presumed would be guaranteed United States financial backing as long as he maintained his staunchly anti-Communist stance.

An example of the Somozas' use of anti-Communist fervor and its relationship to public education in Nicaragua was the creation of the Anti-Communist League, also known as the Death Squad. Its primary job was to suppress not only Communist related propaganda, but also any anti-regime propaganda. The League targeted any efforts to elevate political consciousness that were not clearly pro-Somoza. Furthermore, National Guard forays against citizens as well as both U.S. and Nicaraguan Protestant and Catholic educational efforts were legendary. President Somoza, for instance, had authorized death threats through the Death Squad (the League) on then Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo and several Nicaraguan Jesuits. Capuchin missionaries from the U.S. were continually threatened because Somoza knew that they could provide evidence of National Guard atrocities in Zelaya. In 1976-1977, more that 200 peasants were massacred there in the Christian communities built with the efforts of the Capuchins. These communities provided not only schooling, but also information to the peasants about their legal rights and legal titles to land (Lernoux, 1980: pp. 83-87). Most people in most communities were "fearful of their lives and would not, therefore, protest against smaller things like the lack of schools" (Lernoux, 1980: p. 84).
After the 1972 earthquake leveled Managua, a number of religious orders moved to the slums instead of rebuilding their schools for the rich, but even the well-to-do Catholic schools that remained placed increasing emphasis on the sort of "liberating education" that searches out the whys and wherefores of injustice and poverty. Since this went against the Somoza preference for "uneducated oxen," the government...burdened these Catholic institutions with endless red tape, arbitrary orders to dismiss teachers, and threats of closure. (p. 90)

Somoza continuously used the threat of communism as a rationale to boost his control of society. In a letter from the Managua Priest's Council to United States President Jimmy Carter, the clergy wrote: "The government keeps employment low so that 'communists' will not be able to obtain financial support, and it sends dissident soldiers to jail so that they will not be tempted by 'communism.' In Nicaragua it is very difficult to find a social group that government has not labeled in one way or another as communist or an instrument of Communism" (Lernoux, 1980: p. 103). This tragic rule meant that the regime could not promote or risk any social program or investment that might remotely be construed as aiding or abetting that ideology (p. 103).

In educational programming, Richard Kraft (1983) argues that it was impossible to delineate between education policies and the Nicaraguan regime in the Somoza era, U.S. interests notwithstanding. Somoza and his Education Minister were careful to emphasize publicly the importance of education whenever U.S. and international lending agencies were inclined to approve education aid and the regime's announced use for the aid. The United States' contribution to the Nicaraguan educational system in the 1960s took the form of loans and grants that built schools and helped to develop textbooks that, as late as 1983, were found in schools throughout Central America (pp. 85-86). Primary and secondary education exhibited considerable dependency upon the a United States. Kraft observes that

Although United States dollars and United States advisors [of whom Kraft was one], provided some of the impetus for
building schools, for writing textbooks and for revising curricula, it was obvious to even the most reluctant observer that genuine educational change and reform could only be made upon a change of governments. (p. 86)

Financial support from the United States typically was categorized as developmental and included monies for education, population planning, health, child survival, and human resource development. In Table 4.1 one finds the aggregates for U.S. developmental assistance to Nicaragua. The figures illustrate the fluctuating generosity of U.S. investment during the regime of Somoza DeBayle. Notably, the fluctuation is very great, with dramatic increases and drops from year to year.

TABLE 4.1
UNITED STATES AID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>United States Aid (in Millions of Dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>40.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>16.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to Agency for International Development (AID) documents, there were several AID education projects in place between 1967 and 1979. The first of these, an eight year project with a total cost of $1,227,000 (in U.S. dollars) titled "Education Planning and
Development", was put in place shortly before Anastasio Somoza Debayle's taking office in 1967, and was completed in 1973. The thrust of the project was to promote reform that might increase educational opportunities among the poor. Specific goals of the project included (1) preparation of a national education plan, (2) the development of new textbooks and training personnel to operate as educational materials production center, (3) developing primary and secondary level curricula, (4) equipping libraries and laboratories, (5) providing particular training in education administration planning, (6) providing in-service training for teachers, (7) assisting the Ministry of Education with planning for school remodeling and construction, and (8) providing capital to the Nicaraguan Development Institute (INDE) for use as student loans under its EDUCREDITO program (AID Project No. 5240023).

The second project, begun in 1973 and completed in 1976 at a cost of $5,026,000 (U.S. dollars), was an "Education Sector Loan". Its focus was on the training and upgrading of primary and secondary teachers, primary school directors, and educational inspectors. Approximately 40 percent of Nicaragua's primary teachers were not fully qualified. The Nicaraguan government agreed to provide personnel, materials and some capital (AID Project Nos. 524009001 and 524009002).

Two other projects that began in 1978 had a projected cost of $7,500,000. Their mission was to strengthen rural education, in particular to integrate, extend, and improve education in two rural regions. The centers to be constructed would have included the rehabilitation of 197 classrooms in those areas and 30 schools nationwide. US AID monies would finance furnishings for all new and existing schools in the target regions and purchase 35 four-wheel drive vehicles to be used by school supervisors. Twenty mules would also be provided for use in very isolated areas. As late as 1976, there were 139 primary schools in these two regions without teachers and without enough desks and chairs. Buildings were badly in need of basic repair. Finally, there would be installation of two 10KW radio
stations to transmit educational programming with 2,000 radio/recorders distributed to students and staff in rural classrooms and rural adolescent centers that participated in the accelerated basic education program (AID Project Nos. 5240115 and 524011505). These projects eventually became inactive in 1981. The "inactive" status means that the U.S. government discontinued the project, refused to continue funding it, or left it in limbo. This was a consequence of political disagreement between the United States and the new National Reconstruction Government that had come to power in July 1979.

Politicization Strategy:

General Public Education Policy

"Teaching people to think is the worst crime you can commit under the Somoza government." -1977, rural school teacher whose school had been closed by the National Guard (Lernoux, 1980: p. 85)

Kraft (1983) compresses what I refer to as the general education policies of Somoza into one vivid observation. In early 1973, he personally suggested to Somoza's Minister of Education that "since Nicaragua had been effectively 'de-schooled' (a result of the earthquake), it was an opportune time to launch an all out literacy campaign utilizing the literate young people and their teachers, to form of a literacy brigade (p. 82). Somoza summarily rejected the idea claiming potential revolutionary dangers. Dynasties perpetuate more than a name. When Somoza Debayle's father Anastasio Somoza Garcia visited Costa Rica to tour newly built schools, he commented on the general nature of public education to one of the officials there: "I don't want educated people: I want oxen" (Lernoux, 1980: p. 90).

Somoza Debayle's attitude emerged in his rhetoric. In a 1977 New Year's Eve message to the country, at the same time that rural schools were being shut down by the National Guard, he claimed that his government programs were aimed at the neediest
persons, and that he was directing more public monies toward education, "for the glory of our children." (FBIS, January, 10, 1978: p. 4). Somoza's real attitude and rhetorical display of concern, coupled with the rural teacher's remark, coming as they did just months apart, contain the cruelest irony.

Carlos Tunnerman Bernheim (1985), the first Minister of Education to serve after the fall of Somoza in 1979, suggests that any regime's education policies, including Somoza's, respond to the interests of those in power. Policies carry ideological messages. He argues that the Somoza regime transferred the values necessary to a dictatorship in an underdeveloped country with a dependent capitalistic economy. Competence, for example, had little to do with teacher selection and everything to do with loyalty to the political system. The educational system stressed individualism at the expense of community values. To this end, Nicaraguan history was re-written in the image of Somoza (pp. 66-67). A 1980 report from the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education called the education system under Somoza "one of the most unjust privileges...afforded only the elite, and one of the most powerful instruments of domination and legitimation" (Ministerio de Educación, 1980).

Sylvain Lourie (1989) describes an indirect relationship between education policy strategies and the legitimacy of the Somoza regime. "The extraordinary mass of illiterate and undereducated children in Nicaragua did not belong to anyone except to the Revolution. In fact, Somoza had hardly taken any interest at all in this population, marginal because they were deliberately marginalized, even though it contained the majority of school age children" (p. 183). In essence, Somoza's exclusivist education policies were undermining his regime's legitimacy. The odds were quickly increasing that the seven year old rural child in 1972 would become the 14 year old Sandinista Youth in 1979.

Tunnerman (1992) characterizes Somoza's education policy as a product of dependent capitalism and the dictator's personal wishes. Urban population expansion with
immigrants settling in the slums of the larger cities, together with the infrastructure damage of the 1972 earthquake, impoverished the countryside despite of the cotton boom and industrialization in the early 1970s. Unemployment was 36 percent in 1973. More than 50 percent of Nicaraguan income was under the control of the richest 5 percent of the population. Approximately 49 percent of the work force was employed on 14.7 percent of the available land. The economy was dependent on agricultural exports—the benefits from which were few because low paying food processing jobs were the primary ones available (pp. 1-2).

The education system mirrored the demands of the socio-economic system. There was no coherent national development plan for the economy or for education, only a series of unconnected services (Tunnerman, 1992: p. 3). Tunnerman's data demonstrate the outcome of education policy under the Somoza regime.

- The illiteracy rate was 50.3 percent
- Only 39.8 percent of the population was served by the schools
- 35 percent of children ages 7-12 did not attend school
- In urban areas, only 22 percent of children who began primary school ever finished; in the rural areas only 6 percent finished and more than 50 percent of the students did not continue to the second grade
- Secondary school curricula did not correspond with the country's needs; middle school was mainly a step to university studies with only 1 percent enrolled in agricultural education
- Private education was more elitist than was public education
- Teachers were rarely qualified; only 29 percent of Nicaragua's teachers worked in rural areas where 50 percent of the population lived

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10 According to a 1979 report, it was the auxiliary inspectors in each department of the country that oversaw and assisted directors of education and teachers. They also made recommendations for teacher appointments and only established contact with teachers on the payroll to obtain gratuities or gather information. They never offered assistance to schools. This was particularly the case in rural areas. Inspectors were special people picked to fill these government positions (Ministerio de Educación, 1979).
• Emergency measures taken after the 1972 earthquake further weakened the education system. Academic subjects that could encourage independent thinking, such as philosophy and psychology, were eliminated. In other subjects, classroom hours were reduced (pp. 3-5).

Educational Goals, Input and Beneficiaries

The organizational strategy for personnel in public schools in the 1970s was dysfunctional for actually delivering education services. There was a tendency towards centralization and regime control of all policy from 1967-1978. Given the dependent character of education vis a vis political and economic structures, any sort of decentralization would have proved difficult for a regime that did not favor participation. There would have been more security in a nationally directed education system in which teaching staff could be controlled (Bernal, 1983: p. 55). Such a strategy clearly prevailed in Somoza's Nicaragua. As a consequence, students, teachers, and parents rallied, protesting the alienating structure of education. Demonstrations against the regime's educational policies grew stronger between 1976 and 1979. The Somoza administrative staff in education lacked specialization. The Ministry of Education did not have a Personnel Office to assist with the selection, appointment, and retention of adequate personnel in different positions. This contributed to the high incidence of dishonesty, disorder, and irresponsibility shown by officials appointed for political motives, friendship, or kinship. Teachers were not able to obtain a position merely with a diploma from a school for teachers. They had to take their credentials to their area political representative or the senator for the area. In turn, employment would be approved as long the prospective political affiliations of the teacher candidates were proper -- that is, the aspirant supported Somoza's Liberal Party (PLN). Promotions depended on political solidarities rather than merit or qualifications (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 83-86).
Carlos Torres (1990) estimates that 50 percent of the Nicaraguan population over the age of 10 consisted of absolute illiterates at the end of the Somoza regime. In the countryside the illiteracy rate approached 76 percent -- only one in four Nicaraguans in rural areas could read or write. Torres implicates the United States in this educational catastrophe by its having contributed to Nicaragua's curriculum development, textbook provision, teacher training, and educational planning (p.83). Irrespective of U.S. preferences for Nicaraguan education, the maintenance of illiteracy was instrumental for the Somoza regime. Somoza clearly feared the emergence of a competent and informed rural citizenry. Emergent changes and forces in education, however, threatened to undermine such a repressive rural education policy. Both the forces of the FSLN (Frente) and certain religious groups were attempting to improve rural education. The regime therefore moved to repress such forces. For example, in Zalaya 186 rural schools engaging in self help programs to teach peasants to teach their children were closed by Somoza's National Guard in 1977. In their place, the regime installed "civic action programs, a United States sponsored operation, similar to the strategic-hamlet program in Vietnam" (Lernoux, 1980: p. 86). As a further measure, the regime quelled attempts by religious orders and their schools to open the "door of political consciousness" to children. The regime banned curricula which included logic, sociology, philosophy, and psychology. Penny Lernoux (1980) suggests that this action sought to retard the "liberalizing of education" in favor of the regime's preference for uneducated oxen (p. 90). In the community of Solentiname, a center of liberation theology-driven popular education efforts, libraries were burned by the National Guard to demonstrate the regime's animosity toward change.

The general education policies of Somoza were very sharply delineated in several aspects. In terms of its priority and legal requisites, education would precisely embody what the regime deemed necessary to control its own political and economic development, but
nothing more. As reported above, extramural efforts to promote popular education were repressed. In terms of who might participate in making policy and enjoy its benefits, Somoza's education policies sprang directly from his personal perceptions. Not content to delegate education policy to others, he called himself the "great reformer of the programs of study" and appointed himself the formulator of a New Education Policy in the period from 1967-1979. Many plans and programs within the Ministry of Education were left waiting until Somoza took power in 1967, so that he could present them as his own product. In his fervor to appear an innovator, he dictated to the few experts working for the Ministry. Any modifications of education policy had to correspond to his own political, social, and economic interests (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 77-79).

Between 1967 and 1979 Somoza arbitrarily established Schools of Agriculture without implementing land or agrarian reform. The schools were, thus, clearly intended to benefit those who owned the land, such as the dictator himself and his economic class cohorts and allies, rather than to benefit the landless and land poor peasants of Nicaragua. However, observers also attribute this arbitrariness as much to Somoza's mistrust of his own bureaucracy as to practical policy goals for agriculture. Somoza also changed Nicaragua's academic calendar in order to take full advantage of child labor. The new calendar set school holidays and the general education calendars to accommodate the required maintenance of the sugar, cotton, and coffee crops. This was done because child labor was cheaper than adult labor, and required little or no benefits, thus rendering more profits for landowners and the agrarian bourgeoisie. Sandinista critics of Somoza's education policies concluded that they were never intended to promote the development and integration of the personality of the child or to create capable and well rounded children (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 77-79).
In Somoza's centralized regime, education policy, like other public policy, was carried out in an intricate network connecting Managua elites to persons in the provinces, typically loyal local landowners and wealthy business people. Such allies were central to implementation of social policy. Their position has been described as "an intermediate step of patronage, providing access to a moderate amount of power, income, and opportunities for corruption for local supporters of the regime (Downs, 1985: p. 46). Although education in rural areas in general was deliberately neglected, the Atlantic coastal region from Honduras to Costa Rica was by far the most neglected of all. According to Dixon (1985) the Miskitos [one of the indigenous peoples of the region] had been marginalized and never became a part of Nicaragua's national life. They lived segregated for decades, and were used by the English, the Americans, and Somoza as suited those groups' economic needs. Thousands of Miskitos were afraid to speak their own language outside their community for fear of being taken for sorcerers (pp.249-251). Along the East Coast, both Miskito Indians and Black descendants of slaves spoke English or Indian languages and were Protestants. They saw Somoza's introduction of mandatory Spanish in the schools as his way of destroying their heritage. They believed that Managua deliberately ignored their need for bilingual schooling, roads, hospitals and other public services. Much of the education of the Atlantic Coast peoples was left to mission groups (Kraft, 1983: p. 90). Vilas (1989) explains that the disdain for the Miskitos and for other indigenous groups, the Sumus and Ramas, by the ladino public officials in Managua stemmed from a feeling of cultural superiority. In 1970, the Somocista newspaper Novedades described the inhabitants of Northern Zelaya as migratory and savage. It opined that their languages were considered second class and ought to be eradicated (p. 81).

Educators and students regarded with skepticism three programs that exemplified the true intentions for education of the Somoza regime and the collaborating bourgeois:
EDUCREDITO, the Family Center for Rural Education, and the "Archivo" School. Rather than serve as legitimate tools to develop equity in public education, the first two of these programs were designed, respectively, to alleviate potential revolutionary pressures and to line the pockets of local and regional supporters of Somoza.

EDUCREDITO allegedly channeled private sector educational loans to students from poor families. The Family Center for Rural Education was created to "raise the standard of living for the governed—but the program was symbolic and Somoza siphoned off its resources to raise the standard of living for the rulers" (Booth, 1985: p. 88). The thin support that had existed for these three misdirected post earthquake programs among teachers, secondary school students, unions, and small businesses soon eroded as Somoza's intention to make money off the earthquake became known. The devastation from the earthquake required special attention and treatment in order to restore educational services, yet the reality was that even more children were left out than had been before the quake (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: p. 79).

A classic device of Somoza's shell game with education funds was his penchant for manipulating budget monies -- allegedly to be used for construction of schools, purchase of furniture, and the hiring of teachers -- then embezzling them. The "Archivo" School (literally the "Filing Cabinet" School) was a good example. This consisted of a budget for 100 positions for "ghost teachers" (nonexistent teachers) in a "ghost school" (also nonexistent) (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: p. 84).

Other financial and social setbacks affected education after the 1972 earthquake. Somoza's interest in rebuilding the schools after the devastation became a ruse for more regime control over education, more engagement by the National Guard, and more revenue for the Somozas. The Catholic Church sought independently to help survivors and the cleanup, but Somoza quashed that effort. He required that all relief supplies pass not directly
through Church hands but through the precinct structures of Somoza's Liberal Party. The United States Agency for International Development (AID) provided immediate financial help for relief in the amount of $32 million from the United States government and $112,181 from private American sources. The Nicaraguan treasury however, posted in its official accounting records that the United States contribution was only $16.2 million. No one seemed to feel obligated to explain the gap in the figures (Diederich, 1981: p. 100). Most observers surmise that these funds, too, were embezzled.

Concomitant with rebuilding schools after 1972, Somoza set up construction companies that built inferior structures, particularly temporary housing. The temporary houses built in this manner were made available to dwellers for the equivalent of six dollars a month -- a heavy burden for workers with school-age children. With the "additional cost of busfare and a 15 cent tribute each child had to give to the underpaid government teacher each week, many children did not go to school" (Diederich, 1981: pp. 99-100).

Bernard Diederich (1981) also chronicles the decision that Somoza made to send his own children to America for education. The gesture spoke loudly of his personal lack of confidence in the Nicaraguan education system, public or private. At his family home, El Retiro, his children spoke only English and the library was composed entirely of books in English (p. 103). This family education policy sharply highlighted the division between elite education and mass education in Nicaragua.

Financing Public Education

If the personal attention paid by Somoza DeBayle to general education policy revealed a mistrust of his own society and bureaucracy, education finance policy revealed erratic interest and attention to funding schools. The 1950 Nicaraguan constitution, amended in 1962, was silent on public education as a social policy. The only reference to it at all was
in a specific clause related to legislative power. The clause specified that while certain functions of the legislature such as raising taxes were not delegatable to the executive branch, some functions were. Education was one of those functions. Recognizing that Somoza's concepts of rule of law and respect for the constitution were very limited, it is interesting that Somoza felt compelled to arrogate the education policy making function to himself, just to make it clear who was in control.

The economic and education finance data in Table 4.2, the enrollment data in Table 4.3 and the primary school indicators in Table 4.4 all fluctuate erratically from 1968 to 1979. It is instructive to examine these data across tables as well as within tables. During the last Somoza's regime, Nicaragua's population grew steadily, as did the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) (Table 4.2, cols, 2 and 3). Education expenditures (Table 4.2, col. 5) fluctuated sharply because of the late 1972 Managua earthquake, shooting up in nominal terms for the 1974-1977 period for earthquake recovery. Intriguingly, however, relative education spending (Table 4.2, Col. 9) remained remarkably constant throughout the last years of Somoza's rule. Gross domestic product (GDP) constitutes is an overall measure of national economic performance and capacity. Education expenditures expressed as a percentage of GDP -- a measure of the society's efforts in public education -- remained low and relatively constant--around 2.5 per cent between 1970-1979 (Table 4.2, column 8). Meanwhile the total primary and secondary enrollment grew 55 percent (Table 4.3, column 3 for the years 1970-1979 only).

As the general population of Nicaragua grew by 50 per cent from 1970-1979, actual government expenditures on education did not keep proportionate pace with either the general population or the primary and secondary school enrollment. Actual government spending on education in nominal terms (Column 5, Table 4.2) increased only 17.2 percent
between 1972 and 1978 (and then contracted sharply in the turbulent year 1979). During the
same period, however, total school enrollment went up 28 percent; to be more specific,
elementary enrollment rose 21 percent while secondary enrollment jumped a striking 62
percent (Table 4.3). Thus, during this period the education budget was falling behind
enrollments. Table 4.3 also reveals that the number of teachers increased by only 22 percent
from 1972 through 1978, while the number of students rose by 28 percent.

Further, the data in Table 4.3, school enrollments and teachers, and Table 4.4, age
specific primary enrollment in urban and rural areas, indicate several things: First, obviously
affected by the December 1972 earthquake, the number of school plants — space for
classrooms (Table 4.3, column 9) — did not keep pace with enrollment (Table 4.3, column
3). Second, the 1972-1978 growth of 62 percent for secondary students (Table 4.3, column
5) was largely the product of a surge of attention to high schools during the final few years
of the regime, but that datum does not give an accurate overview of the twelve years of the
regime. Third, the student/teacher ratio changed somewhat erratically, but teachers had an
average of 38 students apiece in 1978 compared to 36 students apiece in 1972.

office and five years before the earthquake -- there were 6,630 primary school teachers, and
234,685 primary school students out of a general population of 1.7 million people. Ten
years later, as Table 4.3 indicates, there were only 9,255 primary school teachers (column
7), 373,198 primary school students (column 4), and a general population of 2.6 million
people (Table 4.2 column 2). The conclusion one can draw is that while the population
increased by one million people, the primary school population growth, which should have
been considerable as a result, did not increase in commensurate fashion. Second, with the
addition of 2,625 teachers by 1976, the new student/teacher ratio in 1976 of 38:1 was higher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population (in Millions)</th>
<th>GDP-in 1980 $ (Millions of U.S. Dollars)</th>
<th>Actual Gov't Expenditures</th>
<th>Actual Gov't Education Expenditures*</th>
<th>Gov't Expenditure as Percentage of GDP</th>
<th>Percentage of Gov't Expenditure on Education</th>
<th>Education Expenditure as Percentage of GDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1875.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1.81*</td>
<td>2003.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1998.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>2064.7</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2110.5</td>
<td>156,100</td>
<td>27,400</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2245.9</td>
<td>177,400</td>
<td>28,200</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2564.7</td>
<td>492,400</td>
<td>68,900</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2560.8</td>
<td>463,500</td>
<td>64,800</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2694.2</td>
<td>417,600</td>
<td>67,600</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2850.5</td>
<td>498,800</td>
<td>80,800</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2690.8</td>
<td>519,300</td>
<td>58,600</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1978.3</td>
<td>385,700</td>
<td>49,300</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growth

1972-1978

17% 27% 233% 35% 161% -63% 0%

Columns (4-10) Gathered from Interamerican Development Bank, Economic and Social Progress In Latin America, 1977 - 1978, Washington, D.C.
(Percentage applied to SALA, 1993 GDP Data).
* Represents only Ministry of Education expenditures, expressed as millions of 1980 dollars.
### TABLE 4.3
PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND TEACHER TOTALS
NICARAGUA: 1968 - 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Primary &amp; Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Primary Enrollment</th>
<th>Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Total Primary &amp; Secondary Teachers</th>
<th>Primary Teachers</th>
<th>Secondary Teachers</th>
<th>Total Primary &amp; Secondary &quot;Schools&quot; -not Structures</th>
<th>Ratio of all Teachers to all Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>287,200</td>
<td>249,700</td>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>8,832</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2427</td>
<td>33:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1.81*</td>
<td>307,600</td>
<td>262,600</td>
<td>45,200</td>
<td>9,090</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2265</td>
<td>34:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>336,700</td>
<td>285,300</td>
<td>51,400</td>
<td>9,116</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2279</td>
<td>40:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>356,300</td>
<td>301,600</td>
<td>54,700</td>
<td>10,161</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2382</td>
<td>35:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>366,700</td>
<td>305,700</td>
<td>61,100</td>
<td>10,161*</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>36:1b</td>
<td>39:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>392,241</td>
<td>323,400</td>
<td>68,800</td>
<td>9,116</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>40:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>404,450</td>
<td>253,259</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2370</td>
<td>39:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>433,663*</td>
<td>268,552</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>11,267*</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>462,786</td>
<td>373,198</td>
<td>89,588</td>
<td>12,034</td>
<td>9255</td>
<td>2779</td>
<td>2610</td>
<td>39:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>474,324</td>
<td>368,895</td>
<td>105,429</td>
<td>12,683</td>
<td>9729</td>
<td>2954</td>
<td>2609</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>468,514</td>
<td>369,640</td>
<td>98,874</td>
<td>12,401</td>
<td>9681</td>
<td>2720</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>522,041</td>
<td>411,315</td>
<td>110,726</td>
<td>14,839</td>
<td>11,307</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Estimate set same as prior year  
  
  b Estimate based on established number of teachers for 1972  
  
  c Estimate based on averaging 1974 & 1976 figures  
  
  d Estimate based on averaging 1974 & 1976 figures  
  
  e Estimate based on averaging 1968 & 1970 figures
than that of 1968 which was 33:1 (Table 4.3 Col. 10). Since education for the masses was predominantly provided by the public sector rather than by the private sector, these figures indicate that the delivery of public education services was not a high priority for the regime. Roughly 89.8 percent of Nicaragua's schools, 80.8 percent of the teachers, and 82.4 percent of the students were in the public sector education system in 1966-1967 (Waggoner, 1971: pp. 93-96) and those percentages varied little over the next ten years.

In 1974, a banner year for economic growth in Nicaragua, according to a United Nations study, there were considerably fewer school age children attending primary school than were eligible. Table 4.4 reveals that, from 1972 through 1978, about one third of Nicaragua's primary-age children were not enrolled in school. Some 31,500 youths were attending secondary school with only 7,400 of them graduating that year (Diederich, 1981: p. 103). In spite of national economic growth, illiteracy seemed endemic. Carlos Torres notes that during the mid 1970s, "about 65 percent of the Nicaraguan children ages 7 to 12 attended primary schools and only 18 percent of those ages 13 to 18 were in secondary schools. About 39 percent of the population in the age range of 6 to 23 was in school, one of the lowest enrollments in the Central American region" (Torres, 1991: p. 82). One half of the population over 10 years of age was illiterate, and before the 1979 revolution there were fewer than 13,000 teachers.

Deborah Brandt (1985) corroborates this assessment of Nicaraguan education by noting that as of 1976-1977: (1) 67 percent of all students were from urban areas, yet most of the urban and rural poor were effectively eliminated from the education system before finishing primary school, (2) 68 percent of all primary age children entered school but one half of those dropped out during the first year, (3) only 5 percent of all rural children finished
school, and (4) secondary school was accessible to only 18 percent of the eligible population (p. 319).

Table 4.4 corroborates the observations of Diederich, Torres, and Brandt, and clarifies the level of interest in schooling children between the ages of 7 and 17 by the Somoza regime. At first glance, these tables appear to paint a picture of educational expansion and efficiency in government. The proportion of the school-age population actually enrolled increased from 62 percent in 1967 to 67 percent in 1972. That proportion (school-age children actually enrolled) then remained at around 67 percent for most of the rest of the 1970s except for a brief dip after the Managua earthquake. These data suggest the general school-age population of Nicaragua increased at a fairly high rate but that the regime kept school enrollment also increasing at a similarly high rate.

One must, however, examine these data from a different perspective, that of the marginalized population. From 1972 on, the Somoza regime consistently failed to reach about one third of the students of school age. Consistently slightly more than one in five students actually in school were enrolled in primary school when they were at ages above 12 years, suggesting both a high failure rate for the schools, and further suggesting that many Nicaraguans could not afford to finish their primary education in a timely manner. Even though government expenditures on education rose 35 percent from 1972 through 1978, education's share of the national budget fell by 63 percent and its percentage share of GDP did not change (Table 4.2) Table 4.3 reveals that, except for rural enrollment, very little changed in the national educational picture in terms of the share of population served.

These data reveal that despite the Somoza regime's efforts to portray itself as efficient and inclusive, and despite its nominally increased expenditures on education in the mid 1970s, little progress was made. By manipulating and distorting the statistics for the period
from 1972-1978 and by shifting budgetary categories, the Somoza regime attempted to put forward an inclusive image in matters of education. The data presented here, however, reveal almost no progress.

Tunnerman (1985) notes that the Somoza regime ended with a literacy rate of 50 percent for both reading and writing. He attributes that catastrophic statistic to teachers whose academic knowledge was hardly more than the students they were teaching. Although public education was called "free," parents nevertheless had to pay building maintenance fees. Pedagogical methods were rudimentary and archaic. "It [instruction] included little more than memorization of facts and figures. School libraries were either poorly stocked or non-existent. Laboratories had old or no equipment. Textbooks were obsolete" (1985: p. 65). No preschools prepared children for first grade except for those of the private schools used by wealthier families. Secondary schools were found primarily in urban areas (p. 65).

The data in Table 4.5 were revealed at special conference in December, 1979, only a few months after the revolutionary overthrow of Somoza. Given that many of the participants of the conference were primarily Sandinista supporters, one might question the integrity of the statistics. Yet they generally do parallel the data in Tables 4.2,4.3, and 4.4 which were compiled from more objective sources. Given that, Table 4.5 demonstrates the differences between urban and rural education at the primary level. The term "school" indicated in columns 8, 9, and 10 refers to classrooms, and the term "structure" indicated in columns 11, 12, and 13 refers to buildings. In urban areas double shifts sometimes operated so that more than one "school" could operate in a single "structure." Thus, the fact that rural school structures grew by 7 percent (Table 4.5, column 13) from 1972-1979, while urban structures grew by only 1 percent (Table 4.5, column 12) does not necessarily mean that proportionately more attention was paid to the rural areas. This is because, as columns 9 and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop. of Children Ages 7-12</th>
<th>Percent of School Age Enrolled Pop.</th>
<th>Total Number of Children Enrolled</th>
<th>Ages 7-12 Enrolled</th>
<th>Percent of Children Enrolled that are 7-12</th>
<th>Rural Enrollment</th>
<th>Percent of Rural Enrolled Age 7-12</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>314,313</td>
<td>62.22%</td>
<td>247,065</td>
<td>195,363</td>
<td>79.15</td>
<td>51,502</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>359,903</td>
<td>66.78</td>
<td>305,690</td>
<td>240,359</td>
<td>78.63</td>
<td>65,331</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>369,025</td>
<td>67.23</td>
<td>318,887</td>
<td>248,095</td>
<td>77.80</td>
<td>70,792</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>384,492</td>
<td>65.87</td>
<td>324,579</td>
<td>253,259</td>
<td>78.03</td>
<td>71,320</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>395,876</td>
<td>67.84</td>
<td>341,533</td>
<td>268,552</td>
<td>78.63</td>
<td>72,981</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>409,255</td>
<td>68.72</td>
<td>362,103</td>
<td>281,727</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>424,763</td>
<td>67.32</td>
<td>368,284</td>
<td>285,959</td>
<td>77.65</td>
<td>82,325</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>436,352</td>
<td>65.37</td>
<td>369,640</td>
<td>285,247</td>
<td>77.17</td>
<td>84,393</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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Growth
1972-78 only 21% - 2% 21% 19% - 2% 29% - 7%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total No. of Students</th>
<th>Urban Students</th>
<th>Rural Students</th>
<th>Total No. of Teachers</th>
<th>Urban Teachers</th>
<th>Rural Teachers</th>
<th>Total No. of Schools</th>
<th>Urban Schools</th>
<th>Rural Schools</th>
<th>Total School Structures</th>
<th>Urban Structures</th>
<th>Rural Structures</th>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>211,587</td>
<td>113,642</td>
<td>77,495</td>
<td>4042</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>2083</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1566</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>1566</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>260,992</td>
<td>184,837</td>
<td>96,155</td>
<td>6535</td>
<td>4423</td>
<td>2212</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>1503</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>274,044</td>
<td>172,385</td>
<td>101,659</td>
<td>6399</td>
<td>4299</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1439</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>1432</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>246,985</td>
<td>167,313</td>
<td>109,672</td>
<td>6912</td>
<td>4577</td>
<td>2335</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>1514</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>297,002</td>
<td>179,577</td>
<td>117,425</td>
<td>7280</td>
<td>4795</td>
<td>2485</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>1607</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>1607</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>309,249</td>
<td>188,910</td>
<td>120,339</td>
<td>7525</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>2541</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>1599</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>347</td>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>314,776</td>
<td>197,591</td>
<td>117,285</td>
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<td>2467</td>
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<td>1545</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>1545</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>315,992</td>
<td>194,478</td>
<td>121,214</td>
<td>7830</td>
<td>5309</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>1628</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>1609</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth 1972-78</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 of Table 4.5 reveal, the number of actual classrooms for urban areas grew by 39 percent, while rural classrooms increased by only 8 percent. Further, as the number of urban students grew by only 5 percent (Table 4.5, column 3), the number of urban teachers grew by 20 percent (Table 4.5, column 6). In contrast, as the number of rural students grew by 26 percent (Table 4.5, column 4), the number of rural teachers grew by only 13 percent (Table 4.5, column 7). The high percentage of children without elementary education is evidence of the inefficiency of the educational system. Among the causes of the failure to enroll so many children were that those children had to work, or had no way of getting to school. Dropout rates were, therefore, high. In rural areas 5.3 of 100 children completed the first grade. Only 29 of 100 children finished six years of elementary education between 1968 and 1978. Those remaining 71 children needed at least seven to nine years to complete the six-year program. In the urban areas, even though 44 percent of children completed their elementary education, only about half of them were able to do so in six consecutive years.

To summarize then, under Anastasio Somoza Debayle the Nicaraguan education system roughly kept even with its late 1960s performance levels -- failing to reach about one third of elementary age students and many fewer high school age students. Even though education spending increased in nominal terms, its total share of the national budget declined. Ratios of teachers to students worsened instead of getting better. That education expenditures remained nearly constant when expressed as a percentage of GDP best illustrates the low priority of education in the regime. Finally, the regime continued to favor urban areas over rural ones in terms of numbers of teachers, classrooms, and structures.

There are several classic examples of incidents in which Somoza redirected monies originally programmed for education. The Plan Wasala was one of them. It was an education project implemented by agricultural technicians, representatives of the National
Bank, and doctors in the public sector. Rather than true education, its purpose was to dominate and subdue peasants. This most unfortunate task was given to half literate teachers, who had two objectives to accomplish: first, to assist the army and the judges in detecting peasants supporting or sympathizing with any guerilla effort, and second, to teach the peasants minimal literacy and numeracy skills. The program attempted to cover up its primary counterinsurgency objective with these educational activities. The level of teacher preparation was so low that the Ministry of Education hired personnel to offer these teachers an orientation that included a means for them to complete their own first, second, third, or fourth grade schooling, and then to train them to teach peasants at a first, second, or third grade level.

In order to fulfill their duties, these Plan Waslala teachers distributed their time as follows: two months of training, two to three months of teaching, and the rest of the time was dedicated to spying for or supporting the soldiers in the National Guard. The Ministry of Education financed this program and transferred voucher expenses to the Ministry of Defense which, in the last analysis, was the party responsible for paying the teachers (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 79-80). Thus, some apparent education spending reflected in the budgets already discussed consisted mainly of a counterinsurgency program.

According to critics of Somoza within the FSLN, a second explanation for the 1970s education budget increases came in the area of improved teacher training. Allegedly, the money was for the Normal Schools (Escuelas Normales) from which many prospective teachers were trained. The dictatorial regime, however, did not employ funds to provide the graduates from these schools any continuing education or achieve any permanent improvement and training programs. Rather, only the administrators and principals of
education centers attended training. This emphasis on administration frustrated the classroom teachers, who were left adrift to improve their skills on their own.

Another example of Somoza's financial shell game was the creation of CENEC (El Centro Nacional de Educación y Ciencias) in 1975. Somoza decided to transform this higher education center for the training of elementary and secondary teachers into a university-level education center for secondary teachers. This action, however, constituted a duplication of effort because the National University had already been put in charge of secondary teacher training. Somoza's probable objective in creating CENEC was to undermine the National University in order to justify a future cut of state funds for this institution. Moreover, the National University had been an incubator of anti-Somoza sentiment and activity, and its School of Educational Science was often accused of training subversives. Thus, the establishment of a second, less ideologically antagonistic teacher training program might have helped, in Somoza's eyes, to produce a less politicized (or more appropriately politicized) secondary teachers corps (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 99-100).

The Points of Control: Curricula, Teachers, Community

Primary education objectives were stipulated in the General Rules of Elementary Education, established by Decree No. 1, January 15, 1975. The decree represents the legal basis for the philosophy and politics of elementary education. Most critics of the Somoza regime's education policies argue that although the elementary and secondary school curricula sounded lofty, they essentially had been designed by a limited cadre of education planners who sought to prepare children mainly to join the workforce in a dependent economy. This was done in order to make human resources more productive within the context of Nicaragua's role in the international economic system. The following analysis of
these educational objectives shows how dependent capitalism shaped Nicaragua's education policies.

Elementary education, according to Decree No. 1, was intended to transmit basic cultural elements, teach students fundamental abilities and skills, and inculcate the ideals and values needed for the development of the individual's capacities. In this manner, children would understand better the world in which they live and better integrate themselves into social life. They would then forge a "democratic conscience," to live in a "free and democratic" society and strengthen their civic ideals, specifically, the ideals of Central American unification\footnote{Central American unification, at times championed by certain Nicaraguan leaders, had its roots in the Central American colonies of Spain forming a single bureaucratic entity. After independence in 1823, the former colonies together founded the Central American Republic. This federation disintegrated by 1839 into the modern Central American states. In the 1970s five countries established the Central American Common Market.} and the love for work.

Professor Guillermo Rosales Herrera (1977) contends that these objectives give the impression that public primary schooling was conceived as the only formal education the majority of Nicaraguan children were going to get, and that its main function was to help them become honest, respectful, industrious citizens, capable of solving their own problems and their communities' problems. Herrera interprets these ethico-moral objectives as means to help maintain the advantages of the dominant classes and to help fulfill Nicaragua's traditional role as a country subjected to the interests of a superordinate capitalist world. It would also, Herrera argues, keep the working class subordinated to the interests of the nation (p. 73).

Miguel de Castilla Urbina (1977) explains the impact of Nicaragua's dependent capitalist role upon education in these terms:
If in the past, the agrarian-dependent capitalism did not need an education oriented toward the development of skills; in the present, the industrialist-dependent capitalism needs technological innovations, machines, administrative and work procedures for its own development. In the past it was possible to learn a trade at the work place; at the present, the practical education in the work place is no longer sufficient and requires an education from the outside. (p. 295)

The need for a change in the Somoza style of education, therefore, would require transformation of both its legal and ideological framework.

The formal goals and objectives of Somoza's Ministry of Education, after 1975, divided public secondary education into two "cycles" or phases (Ministerio de Educación, 1979, pp. 106-109). At first glance these cycles seem ambitious and progressive. The first was the "basic" cycle, three years in length; the second was the "diversified" cycle lasting two to three additional years. The first cycle was designed to provide students with the necessary cultural knowledge to prepare them for their choice of education specialization, eg. Bachelor's, Teacher's, Technical, or Vocational. It attempted to guide students into their incorporation into Nicaraguan social and economic life. The second cycle was to provide a continuation of general education in order to learn a trade or go to a university. Article 345 of the General Rules for Middle Education specified clearly that: "the objective is to provide students with intensive quantitative preparation in scientific and humanistic fields, along with adequate civic education, that will allow them to successfully join the economic and social life of the country or to continue their higher education in local universities or in other countries" (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 101-102). The reality, however, was that very few children would get to the "trade" stage, much less into higher education through the public schools.
From the perspective of Somoza's critics, especially the Sandinistas, such lofty goals were sufficiently self-contradictory to prove detrimental rather than helpful to students. Average children were not succeeding or capable of functioning as "educated" persons in a changing world. The Sandinistas argued that, in a society dominated by a capitalistic system of organization, the labor power became a piece of merchandise, an object of exchange rather than something used personally and independently. Further, the Sandinistas believed that it would have been difficult for the schools to promote leadership skills, because sociology, logic, philosophy, psychology and civic education had all been dropped from the public schools' curricula (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 101-103).

The failure of these educational objectives was particularly clear in the Atlantic Coast area where a mixture of English and various Indian languages was spoken. Spanish, however, was the exclusive language of instruction of the public schools, with little regard to its effect on the non-Spanish speaking children of Miskitos, Sumus, and Ramas, the indigenous peoples. Somoza was ambivalent about this region. On the one hand he considered these groups "migratory and savage." On his infrequent trips there, he spoke English in inappropriate sections of the region, symbolizing his lack of sensitivity to the problem (Vilas, 1989: p. 82). On the other hand, he lauded the picturesque riches of the coastal "civilization" in a paternalistic fashion.

During the Somoza regime both the curriculum and teachers downplayed longstanding anti-imperialistic struggles in the Atlantic region and elsewhere. The fight to oust William Walker, the U.S. filibusterer who seized power in Nicaragua in 1856, disappeared from school lessons as if it had never occurred. César Sandino, the 1930's rebel against U.S. occupation and the newly formed National Guard, was portrayed as a bandit. Somoza had
himself presented as a man of peace. "The poor quality of schools in Nicaragua had not only a financial, but an ideological cause as well (Tunnerman, 1985: pp. 66-67).

According to Robert Arno (1985), in Education and Revolution in Nicaragua, "the textbooks (which did not always reach the rural schools because of the corruption) were extremely biased in content and therefore not suited to the needs of Nicaraguan children. Furthermore, the school system was intended to meet the manpower needs of the economy determined by Nicaraguan dependency on the United States" (p. 5). Attention to education was oriented to complementing foreign interests and the Somoza family businesses. University spending exceeded all other school levels. It was not unexpected that an alternative school "system" emerged in the mountains, organized by FSLN guerrillas for the poorer areas. This education, inspired very early on by the thinking of Sandino and later by Carlos Fonseca Amador, founder of the FSLN, was conceived as an "element for consciousness raising, popular mobilization, and military training" (Torres, 1990: p. 83).

Foreign cultural penetration of Nicaragua through education, abetted by the Somozas, was observed in the commentaries of Rosario Murillo (1985) and Father Ernesto Cardenal (1985). Murillo noted that the Somoza regime valued foreign culture over Nicaraguan culture, education, and arts based upon a paternalistic notion that Somoza knew best what the country should incorporate as its own. For Murillo, "economic domination of our country by other powers also meant cultural domination of our people by foreign cultures—Spanish, British, and North American (p. 40).

Father Cardenal suggested that the closed nature of the Somoza regime was apparent in the fact that before 1979 all of Cardenal's books were prohibited in Nicaragua. Leo Tolstoy's books were pulled from the library shelves and bookstores because he was a Russian. Books brought into the country by native Nicaraguans were confiscated by
customs upon entry into the country, but books were not confiscated from foreigners. Book burnings proliferated, leaving a scarcity of most kinds of books at the time of the 1979 revolution.

Somoza not only destroyed libraries, but the community of Solentiname as well. Solentiname was led by Ernesto Cardenal who would later become the Culture Minister in the revolutionary era. This religious community had been created in 1966. Initially, 30 couples took up residence there with the numbers later swelling to almost a thousand. It was a living symbol of the interest and belief in liberation theology, antithetical to the repressive nature of the Somoza regime (Black, 1981: p. 317). Solentiname symbolized everything Somoza despised. It was the community that produced the FSLN combatants for the 1977 assault on San Carlos National Guard barracks. Somoza ordered the complete destruction of Solentiname after this fiery engagement (Murillo, 1985: p. 43).

Finally, the textbooks used in schools have been criticized as inappropriately grounded in Nicaraguan culture. The books were not linked to the Nicaraguan milieu. Children read the books as if reading stories about foreign countries. The books did not promote a patriotic spirit, according to Hernán Zamora, in his comments on the need for education reform. The books dedicated more time to describe the values of parades, feasts, and theatrical acts, than to the promotion of civic virtues to awaken students to real national heroes and historical events. The artistic design of the books was poor. Their heavy reliance upon dialogues between animals exasperated teachers. The books were deficient as instruments for the scientific education of students. Although there was some information about spacecraft in the third grade books, there was, for example, no information about flora, fauna, or weather. The language deficiencies reportedly were so numerous that one would need hundreds of pages to list them (Zamora, 1966: pp. 103-104).
The regime's apparently lukewarm interest in the financial, material, and personnel aspects of public education set the tone for the Somoza regime's social service relationship with the society at large. Somoza's interests lay with the elites of Nicaragua, with whom he sought to maintain a closed consensus for their mutual benefit but that excluded broader societal concerns. This was made manifest in the previously discussed examples of curriculum creation, control and implementation, and the paucity of any outside group input, such as from parents, experts, or even teachers, into education policy. The regime's inattention to rural areas, its favoritism toward urban education, the erratic budgetary patterns, the use of educational programs as tools for counterinsurgency, and the distortion of texts were common problems of Nicaraguan education under Anastasio Somoza Debayle.

The problems with Somoza's education policies may be further illustrated by the general plight of teachers. Their difficulties first came to light in 1960 during Luis Somoza DeBayle's regime and had intensified by 1972. During this twelve year period there arose a teacher's movement, an unprecedented struggle to organize by education personnel. Some 26 teacher's unions all over Nicaragua were able to establish an umbrella organization called the Syndicalist Federation of Teachers of Nicaragua (SFTN).

In reaction to the nation's centralizing and discriminatory educational administration, the SFTN fought for teacher's rights and benefits. It called one major effort the National Movement for the Dignity of Teachers. Its demands included salary raises, periodic revision of the salary table, teachers' inclusion in the national social security system (a health care program), the introduction of longevity pay steps for teaching positions, and a reform of the special law on retirement. The demands also included a halt to firings, transfers, and demotions of teachers. This struggle was undertaken by the Syndicated Federation of Teachers of Nicaragua between 1969 and March, 1972, the same month that the Supreme
Court of Justice ruled against the reinstatement of 174 suspended teachers. In 1970, the SFTN held its 25th Congress in Managua, hoping to demonstrate its power and numbers (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 87-90).

The regime attempted to suppress the teacher's movement. In addition to the general repression of teachers, the Ministry of Education declared the Syndicalist Federation of Teachers of Nicaragua to be illegal. The Ministry also conducted a campaign to discredit members of the organization. The government used judicial sanctions to freeze the union's assets, suspended payments for a teacher's housing program, suspended payroll deduction of union fees, jailed and fired the leaders of the union, and initiated the unification of a number of government unions, known as "white unions." In 1972, these pro government teachers' groups united to form the Confederation of Democratic Teachers of Nicaragua, sanctioned by the government. This development set teachers against teachers, and clearly represented a divide-and-conquer tactic by the Ministry.

After the 1972 earthquake, the SFTN went through a very difficult period, but did not disappear despite the disarticulation of its organization by the regime and despite its leadership's lack of clear objectives. The SFTN ceased routine functioning for several years, and its assets were transferred to the government's unions. In order to survive, the independent teacher's movement consequently began associating with the World Confederation of Teaching Professionals (CMOPE). This arrangement allowed the SFTN to continue covertly despite repression against its members. The Confederation of Democratic Teachers of Nicaragua in the meantime became a formal organization of the Ministry of Public Education (i.e., enjoyed legal recognition) between 1971 and 1977.

Teachers became increasingly politicized during the mid 1970s. "In July of 1978, six teachers' organizations held a "Seminar on the Teachers Organizations of Nicaragua" and
decided to found the National Association of Teachers of Nicaragua (Asociación Nacional de Educadores de Nicaragua -- ANDEN). This group aligned itself clearly with the anti-Somoza opposition. It took a belligerent position in the struggle for liberation and identified with the prospects of revolution (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 87-90).

Other general political unrest associated with the education sector included several student strikes which preceded a general public worker's strike of 1978. The general worker's strike was sanctioned by the anti Somoza Broad Opposition Front (FAO) and also by an estimated 70 to 80 percent of Nicaraguan businesses. Students took over their high schools in Managua and other cities, the first time on May 15, 1978. The student strike ended three days later when the National Guard evicted most of the strikers and beat many of them, according to the National Parents Association. A subsequent two week student strike ended the same way July 11-12, 1978 (World News Digest Facts on File, Inc. August 4, 1978).

Observations: General and Education Finance Policy

In 1968, the Somoza regime announced a project called "Education Reform." The effort, nominally lasting until 1979, was basically a superficial review to renovate study programs and curricula and was devoid of real reform. It was, for all purposes, only a "desk" plan of Ministry bureaucrats in association with Somoza.

For Nicaragua to achieve authentic educational reform would have required radical changes of the nation's political, economic, social, and cultural structures. Some argue that education reform would have helped to halt unnecessary political unrest in opposition to the regime. That this so-called reform began in 1968, the year when the last Somoza came to power, is not an accident. Within this politically motivated, bogus reformism there were several specific plans: The National Plan for the Educational Development (1971-1980) and
the National Plan for the Development of the Educational Sector (1975-1979) were both elaborated by the experts of the SALA Commission (Southwest Alliance for Latin America). The Plan for Immediate Action (1973) and the Operative Plan (1974) came into existence supposedly to reactivate education after the 1972 earthquake. All of these were, however, mainly restricted to the bureaucracy and never made known to the people of Nicaragua. Such dissemination would have encouraged community input and, therefore, risked criticism that would have been unacceptable to the regime (Ministerio de Educación, 1979: pp. 75-77).

The hypothesis posed in this chapter asserts that under Somoza's rightist regime, both general education policy and education finance would have been restrictive. That is, there would have been powerful barriers to or limits upon input into education policy, limits on access to education policy to those outside the regime, and low levels of government education expenditures. By way of illustrating the low level of expenditures consider the situations in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In comparison to education expenditures in these neighboring countries, Nicaragua trailed all four of them in spending on overall primary and secondary education.12

The evidence reviewed so far reveals several things: (1) The personal signature of Somoza was omnipresent in policy and in the highly centralized education system dominated by political patronage. (2) Key elites remained placid as long as the education system benefitted dependent capitalism. (3) Teachers and their unions were heavily repressed and

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12 Minimum estimates of total expenditures at the primary and secondary levels in 1980 (in millions of 1970 U.S. dollars) were as follows: Costa Rica, $32.5 primary and $30.2 secondary; El Salvador, $25.1 primary and $16.5 secondary; Guatemala, $26.1 primary and $22.8 secondary; Honduras, $23.3 primary and $26.9 secondary; Nicaragua, $16.6 primary and $20.4 secondary. (Financing Education in Latin America: 1978, p. 100).
controlled by the government. (4) The manipulation of public monies allotted for education hid extensive misappropriation of funds. (5) Expenditures and enrollment data reveal that the Somoza regime barely kept even with growing demand for education. As GDP was slowly rising, regime expenditures for education and per capita spending were declining relative to population growth and to the government's general budget. (6) Education spending as a percentage of GDP was very low and largely static from 1972-1979. (7) Increases in school enrollment and teacher/student ratios fell behind population increases. (8) The rationale for avoiding decentralized education policies, whether in teacher hirings, curriculum changes, or school facilities, was to curb threats to the regime.

The Somoza regime's education policies aimed to restrict rather than to expand education. They were minimalist, doctrinaire, and underfunded. The regime monitored suspect community groups to prevent them from conspiring to reform education and therefore society—a threat too great to be overlooked by Anastasio Somoza Debayle. Given these patterns, the ideology or belief system of the regime drove education policy, irrespective of financial capability. Had Somoza adopted an expansionist education policy, the public might well eventually have pressed the regime for even more spending on education. Had he then not delivered, one may speculate that the revolution might have come even sooner than it did. Anastasio Somoza Debayle's highly personalized and centralized control of education policy assured that education spending—including AID monies from the United States—would support his objectives. Ironically, one consequence of such policy and practices during the Somoza regime would be a virtual fixation on education by the revolutionary government that came to power in 1979.
CHAPTER V

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA:

THE NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION GOVERNMENT AND

THE ORTEGA ADMINISTRATION

In its early years, 1979-1984, the revolution drew its authority from a movement of myriad forces. The revolutionary government and education policy were redefined in 1984. The second period, 1984-1990, was marked by authority drawn from a popular election, with the hope of consolidating revolutionary power. The education policies in both these periods show the regime's fervor to expand public education, in order to create an educated society. They also reveal that consensus on any public policy is fragile after massive change. This chapter examines the revolution's efforts to promote the goals of the revolution through education in a society torn by anti-regime violence. The chapter also addresses both the conflict that emerges when repression is lifted, and the pitfalls of coupling ideology and education policy.

The Regime: Ideology and Politicization

"Revolution and education are the same thing."

-Fidel Castro, 1961

Were Castro's affirmation correct, the FSLN's revolutionary restructuring of the Nicaraguan state and society would have been made easier. The revolution began by initiating an ambitious and for the most part successful national literacy campaign in early 1980. The literacy campaign was a feat appreciated by teachers who were an integral part of its success. Almost ten years later, however, several months before his defeat at the polls in 1990, Sandinista President Daniel Ortega faced a fiery teachers' strike. Further, the years
had failed to produce a national consensus about what the revolution meant in terms of public education policy.

Revolutionary policy on education had two distinct phases: that of the early revolutionary National Reconstruction Government (1979-1984), and that of the elected Ortega administration (1984-1990). The Sandinista regime in the first period began as a loose revolutionary coalition with the FSLN gradually rising to dominate. Its ambitious goal was to create a "New Nicaraguan" -- politically conscious, literate, and educated. During the second phase education policy would reflect the consequences of the revolution's early general policies and actions on education, as well as other powerful constraints. Both periods would be strongly influenced by the war between the revolutionary government and various counterrevolutionary "Contra" organizations (many of them supporters of the former Somoza regime) and the massive U.S. support of the Contras. It is helpful to view this ten year revolutionary era in terms of two the periods of policy transition demarcated by the 1984 election. Juan Arrien (1989) goes even further, suggesting that one can delineate changes, progress, and setbacks in education policy into three distinct periods: 1979-1984, 1984-1986, and 1987-1989. Arrien's latter two periods divide the years of the Ortega government into its early phase, marked by an intense counterinsurgency effort against the Contras, and its later phase dominated by response to severe economic recession and hyperinflation.

The use of education to prolong revolutionary fervor was explicit in the three basic goals of the 1979 Sandinista National Reconstruction Government. First, in its socio-economic policy, the regime sought redistribution of land, full employment, and universal literacy. Second, it sought popular participation in education through such groups as the Sandinista Worker's Confederation, the Association of Rural Workers, the Sandinista
Defense Committees, the Sandinista Youth, and the Association of Nicaraguan Women. Each of these groups initially became active in the 1980 literacy campaign, known as the National Literacy Crusade (La Cruzada Nacional de Alfabetización — CNA). The campaign was the cornerstone for a comprehensive overhaul of the public education system in Nicaragua. The third goal was to create a new Nicaraguan citizen who understood the value of hard work, humility, and sacrifice and who could attain a critical consciousness. This last goal arose from the unfortunate necessity for austerity imposed upon the revolution by the 1978-1979 insurrection and war and by the government's poverty. A country in the throes of bankruptcy would have to sacrifice some public goods, the Sandinistas reasoned, including those associated with education. The revolutionaries hoped that "critically conscious" citizens would understand the need for such sacrifices (Kraft, 1983. p. 99).

These goals forecast the ideological path of the early revolutionary years: public equity through state efforts, popular access to the political process, increased public awareness of the political system, public inclusion in policy processes. Each entailed risks associated with promoting massive change. One could argue that such educational goals were both lofty and partially self-contradictory, inviting criticism from students and adults with newly acquired learning. Revolutionary education policy was, above all else, a far cry from the Somoza regime's tendency to withhold education from the society at large. Further, the Sandinistas' interest in promoting a Freirian approach to pedagogy had dual implications. Increased knowledge of self, like the Nicaraguan revolution itself, is a

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13 Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator, argued that individual development inspires social consciousness and produces a critically thinking individual oriented toward the community. The result of free thinking is criticism and the option for social change. Individuals will realize problems and errors in political processes and policies. In an analogous way the Sandinista revolution and its constitution were paradoxical. The revolution could not be an end but rather a beginning, just as learning is not an end but a beginning. Revolution and
catalyst for change. How does one perpetuate revolutionary spirit, its goals, and its processes without producing a continuous process of change? Therefore, the revolution would face strong prospects of criticism generated by its own educational project and processes.

In both its earlier and later phases, the Sandinista revolution promoted its educational goals but it experienced significant problems throughout. The revolution suffered first from the fragmentation of the initial revolutionary coalition, then from the rise of the Contras, and from the loss of U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) monies from 1983 to 1990. The development and promotion of education policies thus consistently took place in a polarized political environment and with a rapidly shifting resource base.

In this polarized environment, the Revolution and its governments reconfigured the Nicaraguan state drawing upon myriad ideological perspectives, including Sandinismo, Marxism, democracy, Christianity, Catholicism, liberation theology, capitalist dependency, and capitalism. Major actors advocating these philosophies drifted in and out of general agreement and association with the National Reconstruction Government (1979-1984) and with the elected Ortega administration (1984-1990). This loose and shifting coalition in the early years set up a potentially inclusive system of policy formation open to various points of view. Consensus on education policy began to erode even before 1984, however. Redefining the meaning of the revolution, especially in the context of the economic demands of the Contra war, became increasingly difficult, complicating general education policy and public education finance.

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state building are two different processes: the former overthrows authority, the latter imposes it. The "institutionalization" of any revolutionary process, whether a political or education system via a document is a necessarily self-contradictory process. The ideals of the revolution, coupled with the changes that critical thinking brings through education, will eventually come to loggerheads (Barton, 1988. pp. 64-65).
According to Arturo Cruz, Jr., the "new state" established after the 1979 revolution, if gauged by the primary actors, was full of paradoxes. The old families with power all knew each other as enemies and friends, and were intertwined irrespective of ideological differences. For all practical purposes:

the sons and daughters of Nicaragua's traditional, historical families became part and parcel of the Ortega dispensation, just as they were with Somoza. The Somozans made the State their family patrimony. The same could have happened to the Ortegas. It would appear that Nicaragua has emerged from an absolute form of Somocismo to a form more scientific, more modern. (1987, p. 35)

To frame it another way is useful. By the second phase of the revolution, with Daniel Ortega Saavedra serving as the elected president, the public had begun to question the regime's goals and policies. Stephen Schwartz (1992) writes that when New York reporter Paul Berman returned to the United States after a 1988 visit to Nicaragua he reported three major findings. First, average Nicaraguans had come to believe that they were worse off than when under the Somozas. Second, popular democracy in the context of the revolution really meant Sandinista power. And third, state employees, many of them idealistic supporters of the intelligensia and certain FSLN elites believed that the revolution was a success because they had gained favor. Schwartz claimed that Sandinista rule -- "the government of poets -- can be defined, after all, as the dictatorship of the intelligensia" (p. 71).

By the mid 1980's, many Nicaraguans blamed the FSLN's coercive tactics, mismanagement, and inefficiency for poor public programs and food shortages. The Sandinistas also were accused of distributing resources unfairly and unequally. The comments of business and labor leaders such as Jaime Bengoeden Delgadillo and Alejandro
Solorzano exemplified these complaints. Delgadillo, a president of the Chamber of
Industries and member of the Council of State from 1980-1984 noted that:

The Sandinistas use three means to enforce obedience. They control the press; they apply the law
in an irregular way so that the ordinary citizen feels insecure; and they distribute food and other
necessities through outlets that only certain card holders can use. The whole system is very subtle.
Those of us who have stayed here want a transformation of this country, but not one that
disrupts our cultural and economic traditions. We are trying to build a democracy in a country where
democracy has never existed. (U.S. State Department: 1988: p. 76)

Solorzano, a Communist labor leader, was jailed twice by the Sandinistas for leading
construction strikes and hunger strikes for higher wages and bonus demands. He also efforts
by the National Reconstruction Government to force the the Communist union confederation
(CGT-I) into an FSLN controlled union federation. It appeared that there was a special order
to groups seeking resources from the government. First in line to receive resources was the
FSLN itself, then the police, followed by the army, foreign revolutionary tourists, and finally
the people of Nicaragua. Government supporters such as Commandante Jaime Wheelock
repeatedly explained that the Contra war left the country with no money for "development".
Schwartz (1992) suggests it was the "opulence" in which the Sandinista commandants and
their foreign associates lived that gave a rapacious image to the revolutionary leadership.

Disaffected non-Spanish speaking groups and persons like Bryan Brooklyn Rivera,
an indigenous leader originally a supporter of the revolution, also criticized the FSLN's
policies. The use of Cuban teachers to replace the Indian educators, however, and the
murders of Indian leaders, such as Roger Suárez, a leader of the Puerto Cabezas Workers
Union, changed Rivera's attitude about Sandinista goals. Rivera, once a Sandinista advocate,
eventually became a Contra and fought the revolution and its policies (U.S. State Department, 1988: p. 42).

Jenelee Hodgson Bobb, a vocal force, teacher, and eventually a Creole opposition leader to the Sandinistas, initially had encouraged the Atlantic Coast community to support the FSLN—a trade off for development projects for the region. In 1980, however, as a teacher she was required to take a course in Sandinista indoctrination. "She decided at that point that the revolution had lost its original direction and she began opposing FSLN policies. She concluded that she could no longer teach if Marxist indoctrination was to be part of the curriculum" (U.S. Department of State, 1988: p. 42). Her impression was that the government was enslaving the minds of the people in a totalitarian fashion.

Bayardo Arce joined the FSLN as a student protester shortly after Anastasio Somoza Debayle's regime began in 1967. Considered a party theorist and ideological hardliner, Arce spoke before the Moscow line Communist PSN in 1984, in which he made it clear that the FSLN's goal was to create a one-party state (U.S. Department of State, 1988: p. 15).

The attitudes and actions of these individuals are examples of a considerable departure from the brief revolutionary consensus that developed after 1979. After the 1984 election, some of these individuals became deeply alienated from each other and some became the revolution's most determined enemies. Robert Arnoive and Anthony DeWees (1992) attribute this ideological fragmentation of the revolution to various factors: (1) the prior merger to depose Somoza of three significant historical currents—a Latin American version of Marxism, nationalism, and a variant of Christian liberation theology—into the revolutionary coalition, (2) the maintenance of political pluralism within Nicaragua after 1979, and (3) the revolutionary emphasis on non-alignment and participatory democracy (pp. 170-171). The resultant divergent forces and interests, combined with the various vested
anti-Sandinista interests and pressure from the United States, fragmented the revolutionary coalition. This fragmentation profoundly affected education policy. "The tensions and contradictions that beset education were manifestations not only of conflicts between historical projects of the social classes and political groups aligned with the FSLN and those of the opposition forces, but also of divergent viewpoints within the ruling FLSN party" (Arnove: 1994. p. 15). Opinions and attitudes of the Church, the parents of school children, the Ministry of Education bureaucracy and the FSLN, to name a few, were central in such contested arenas in reaction to the widely perceived "fusion of the [FSLN] party, the government and the state; and the content and emphases of education" (p. 15).

**Politicization of Public Education:**

**General Education Policy**

Education played a role absolutely central to both stages of the revolution—it was an integrating force for the revolutionary legacy. Booth (1985) argues that the new revolutionary regime promoted a congeries of public policies that would permit all Nicaraguans to develop and would reduce social and economic inequities. The National Literacy Crusade (CNA) of 1980 attacked all illiteracy, used organizations, youth, teachers, rural and urban volunteers, and worked through the auspices of the FSLN's National Directorate and of the Education Minister, Carlos Tunnerman. The CNA forged a kind of national solidarity and success, but employed clearly pro-Sandinista instructional materials. Some anti-Sandinista forces, not surprisingly, denounced the entire effort as an attack on traditional social and political mores (p. 233).

Valerie Miller (1985), however, suggests that the revolutionary government was engaged in nation building during the CNA, and reports that the project attracted diverse ideological support. The Somoza era of repression, inequity, and corruption was to be
transformed to one of egalitarianism, participation, and redistribution of power. "Even the Catholic church hierarchy and the more conservative members of the Junta who were wealthy, with business interests supported this position" (p. 205). Many agreed that the old education system was bankrupt. The cooperation with and support for the literacy effort raised the hopes of many that popular and public education would progress. Groups would be added to the process or taken more into account. The CNA represented community action -- "striking a balance between national action and local participation" (p. 225).

Prior to the CNA, rural illiteracy in Nicaragua was 76.15 percent, only six percent of the children finished their primary education, and 53 per cent of the children left school before second grade. Some 90 per cent of the schools had only one teacher, 81 percent of the "schools" had only one room, and only 1 percent of the schools offered a complete tenth grade education. Thirty percent of the teachers were "empiricists" -- so poorly trained that Juan Arrien refers to them as "charlatans" (1989: p. 95).

The revolution's first Minister of Education was Carlos Tunnerman (1979-1984), a Catholic who had served previously as the Rector (chancellor or president) of the University of Nicaragua. Tunnerman claimed that

the expansion, empowerment, and transformation of education would contribute to the democratization of basic social services, the independence of the economy of foreign domination, and the development of the new model of capital accumulation based on different social relations. (quoted in Arnove and Dewees, 1992: p. 171)

In the early years, the revolution made education a priority, and formally worked to expand education for the masses. These efforts incorporated into education policy making the work of many groups, especially teachers and parents. It was a dynamic process with the government's education agenda opening debate, conflict, and much discussion. The
examples that follow, drawn from the 1980-1984 period, give testimony to that debate, as education achieved high visibility both in the press and at the community level.

First, the UNESCO Director General, Amadon Mahtar M'Bow, committed technical and economic aid to help eradicate illiteracy in Nicaragua. The estimated cost of this venture was $20 million with 180,000 teacher participants, included among them Cuban internationalist educators (FBIS, January 10, 1980 p. 11).

Second, the central role that teachers would come to play became evident not only in the 1980 literacy campaign, but also in efforts to develop the "New Nicaraguan." On January 5, 1980, the Association of Nicaraguan Teachers (ANDEN) held an assembly for members to meet with Revolutionary Commander Bayardo Arce and to discuss the role of teachers in the revolutionary process. Arce believed that ANDEN should play the role of a political organization and provide political training for Nicaraguan teachers. Sixteen departmental delegations and 96 municipal delegations participated in this meeting (FBIS, Radio Sandino, January 10, 1980 p. 11).

After the Literacy Campaign began in April, 1980, the expectation of solidarity by teachers was noted in a Radio Sandino address by Wilfredo López Valladares. He made it clear that "We don't want to believe that there are teachers who are opposed to education, nor do we want 'cavemen' with teaching certificates who are against literacy, or who long for the corrupt Somoza era when consciences were sold to the vilest bidder" (FBIS April 15, 1980 p. 9). One can hardly imagine a teacher opposed to literacy. However, it was clear that some teachers rejected the idea of turning the country into a big school and would have liked to see the times return when learning and teaching had been the means to obtain privileges.
Moisés Hassan, a member of the Governing Junta, suggested that teachers who did not become involved in the literacy campaign might be fired. About 4,000 teachers were refusing to do their "duty" vis-a-vis the CNA. Commander Arce admonished that "nothing will stop the FSLN from teaching our workers and peasants to read or from carrying out revolutionary changes" (FBIS April 14-18, 1980 pp. 11-12).

Later that month the presence of opposition to the CNA was underscored when the government had to deploy the military to ensure the safety of CNA teachers. The people of Neuva Segovia were assured that the enemies of the revolution could not prevent peasants from moving towards literacy, away from the state of illiteracy inherited from the Somoza regime. The government of National Reconstruction and the Sandinista Front promised to guarantee teacher safety. These [teachers] are our "soldiers of culture" (FBIS, April 22, 1980 p. 16).

Both violence and compromise became parts of the CNA. In mid 1980, a literacy teacher, Marta Lorena Vargas was killed in the El Coyolor community, Jinotega Department. The crime initiated widespread concern among several mass organizations in Jinotega because the act constituted another counterrevolutionary attempt to block the literacy process (FBIS, July 25, 1980 pp. 5-7). A few days later the Patriotic Front held a news conference to proclaim the common links and goals among the diverse political parties in Nicaragua. Participants included Bayardo Arce, Commander of the revolution representing the FSLN; Luis Sánchez and Gustavo Tablada of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party; Edgard Macias and César Delgadillo from the People's Social Christian Party; and Rodolfo Robelo of the Independent Liberal Party. The conference was held bolster public commitment to the fundamental rights of Nicaraguans, including the right to an education. Major priorities were established in the field of education (FBIS, July 25, 1980 pp. 5-7).
These political parties, along with the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement and the Democratic Conservative Party of Nicaragua, pledged their continued commitment to democratic progress in a paid political advertisement. In the advertisement the parties defined democracy as (1) inclusive of all groups except those that would try to return to Somocism, and embodying (2) equality before the law, (3) the right to an education, housing, health, a job, and (4) participation of all people, irrespective of class differences, through periodic exercise of universal suffrage (FBIS, September 23, 1980 p. 10).

On February 12, 1980, the issue of nationalizing private schools surfaced. Education Minister Carlos Tunnerman, a Catholic, told newsmen that the regime had not thought of nationalizing private schools because it was not in an economic position to do so. Since the victory of their revolution, public education had been provided completely free, so that to nationalize private schools would increase state expenditures beyond its ability. He noted that the ten private educational centers that had been nationalized up to that point had belonged to Somocistas. Tunnerman explained that he had visited with officials at several private schools facing financial problems and that these groups were seeking a solution. Speculation that the revolutionary government would nationalize private schools at that point was attributed to Managua Archbishop Monseignor Miguel Obando y Bravo, an opponent of the Sandinista regime. Obando later observed that he had been misrepresented (FBIS, Radio Sandino, February 19, 1980 p. 17).

Two months later, however, Radio Sandino announced that 11 private school would be nationalized during the 1980-1981 school year. Other private schools, particularly religious ones, would come under state control only at the owner’s request (FBIS, April 15, 1980 p. 9). [By 1987 with the writing of a new Constitution, article 124 of that document]
stated that education is secular, but that the state recognized the right of private educational centers with a religious orientation to impart religion as an extracurricular subject].

The question of what constituted a "private" school was to be a controversial matter for the next several years. Individuals such as Xavier Zavala, Executive Secretary of the Permanent Human Rights Commission, President of the Union of Parents for Christian Education, and former coordinator for the FAO in 1977, increased the intensity of the debate. Zavala (1988) maintained that all the constitutional language was nothing more than a ruse. He claimed that to give to the state the responsibility to inculcate values, ideas, morals, and ethics for the "New Nicaraguan" meant to pursue not the people's agenda for these items, but rather the revolutionary government's ideological agenda. Second, he argued that Tomás Borge, a high level FSLN commander and Interior Minister, had made the pedagogical role of the teachers very clear. They were to promulgate the FSLN ideology through the educational sector. Third, Zavala argued that the language of the constitution declaring a parents' liberty, but not "right" to choose a school other than the ones created by the State, was not a sufficient guarantee. Fourth, Zavala feared that the eradication of private schools was likely under the FSLN. If "private" were to mean nothing more than the existence of schools for those who could pay to attend, then there would continue to be private schools; if however, "private" were to mean the existence of educational entities possessing certain autonomy in educational matters, then there would be no private schools (pp. 2-3).

In October, 1980, the Bluefields branch of the National Association of Teachers (ANDEN) issued a communique to the people of Bluefields. (Bluefields was a neglected area on the Atlantic coast and had been the scene of notable violence during the Somoza regime.) ANDEN's message, in resolution form, could not have been clearer as to the group's commitment to Bluefields and to certain principles of the revolution. The resolution
condemned any group that attempted to manipulate the locale with imperialistic slogans, harm the Cuban teachers who had come to assist with education, and included a call to increase education personnel in the area. The message ended with the slogan "Sandino yesterday, Sandino today, Sandino tomorrow" (FBIS October 2, 1980, pp. 7-8). Most of the contingent of Cuban teachers left by July, 1981. As a force of 2,000 persons, working primarily in all rural areas, they had come in two waves since 1979 with the Cuban government financing their stay. Nicaraguan Ministry of Education spokesman, Silvio Mora, said that if by 1982 Nicaragua needed more teachers to complement its educational programs in rural areas, it would request aid from all countries, including the United States and Socialist countries, especially Cuba (FBIS, June 5, 1981 pp. 14-15).

Shortly after Mora's announcement, Nicaragua's teachers presented a list of demands to the regime. Ortega spokesmen claimed that the reactionary media distorted the teacher's demands in order to embarrass the regime. The media reported that the teachers' demands did not include salary increases. In a case where the Education Ministry is part of a revolutionary government and the teachers represented by ANDEN were revolutionary teachers, consensus was not assured but neither was confrontation to be expected. Salaries were not being discussed because the teachers were aware that, in 1981, the regime had used 50 million córdobas for moderate salary increases. There was no conflict, according to Education Minister Tunnerman. Approximately 18,000 teachers should benefit from the ANDEN-Education Ministry agreement negotiated in the environment of revolutionary common sense. Allegedly, certain media were hoping to foster a conflict between the employer (the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education) and the employees (ANDEN) in order to promote the impression that dissension and divisiveness existed between the government and its public employees (FBIS, June 5, 1981 p. 14).
Members of ANDEN also supported military and political training for the potential defense of the country and themselves participated in that training. In the Western regions of León and Chinandega, students of various secondary schools formed the "Raúl Cabezas Lacayo" reserve battalions and awaited their turn for training. The members of Sandinista Youth battalions commonly flowed from secondary schools (FBIS, June 5, 1981 p. 14). By 1984, however, high school students such as "Elisabeth" (a pseudonym) joined a Contra organization called the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) after having been forcibly recruited by Sandinista soldiers and taken to Pantasma for military training. She deserted and went to Managua to work with the FDN.

I joined...because of the way [the Sandinistas] were mistreating the people...I didn't like it because [the Sandinistas] didn't teach things the way they really were. Only things about Sandino, the death of soldiers and Sandino, and Cuban things—these were the things they taught us...that nobody had a right to sell things by themselves or say what you wanted, that everything was organized. (U.S. Department of State, 1988: p. 47)

In October, 1982, the continuing debate on education policies among political parties included a disagreement about the direction of education for secondary school students and the focus of their learning. According to Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN) spokesman Alfonso Robelo, out of the 15,000 students expected to graduate at the end of the year, the regime intended to grant admission to only 3,900 to pursue professional studies at the universities. The MDN saw this policy as one of "dual purpose": to force technical careers for many and prevent others from developing their full capabilities. There were critical comments from the MDN about placement tests for secondary graduates which include certain questions in social sciences. The questions referred to the Sandinista state, the role it played in class struggle, and mentioned historical materialism, part of communist
theory. The MDN did not object to the teaching about communism, but rather to the notion of forcibly making students accept it. Arguments subsequently ensued about the proportion of budget expenditures allocated to the military versus those to education (FBIS, October 5, 1981 pp. 14-15).

Carlos Tunnerman's service as Education Minister ended in 1984 when the Junta named him Ambassador to the United States. The new Education Minister, Fernando Cardenal, was a Jesuit priest who had headed the National Literacy Campaign in 1980. In announcing the appointment, Junta leader Daniel Ortega said, "This revolution that is said to persecute religion, puts education in the hands of a priest. What country in the world puts a priest in charge of education? Only Nicaragua" (UPI, July, 1984). One can only speculate as to whether this remark was for the benefit of undecided Catholic voters during the upcoming national elections, or for the benefit of the United States State Department. All U.S. aid funding, which would have certainly helped the regime had it been available, had been frozen.

Each of these events, conflicts, observations, and debates in the first four years of the Sandinista revolutionary era generated promises, agreements, contradictions, and concerns about the education system. The level of visible controversy about education and numerous other policy questions as well, it seemed, was remarkably high for a leftist regime.

Transitional Blueprints:

The Documents of Rhetoric and Reality

Two documents, the Historic Program of the FSLN (1982) and the new Constitution of Nicaragua (1987), established the legal framework for education strategy during the revolutionary era. In the first of these documents one senses both the determination and the euphoric hope of the Sandinista People's Revolution. The goals note the deteriorated state
of public education in Nicaragua and allude to the need to expand education policy with an
eye towards student and teacher needs, as perceived by students and teachers themselves.
The Historic Program document goals would have

(1) Pushed forward the plan to destroy illiteracy.

(2) Promoted the development and progress at the primary and secondary
levels.

(3) Offered free education at all levels with obligatory attendance at certain
levels.

(4) Trained more and better teachers to satisfy the needs of the students.

(5) Nationalized centers of private education that had been “immorally turned
into industries by merchants who hypocritically invoke religious principles.”

(6) Improved teaching methods to the needs of the country. (Sandinistas Speak,
1982: p. 17)

By the drafting of the second document, the 1987 Nicaraguan Constitution, however,
some of the generalizations and fervor expressed in the goals of 1982 gave way to more
specificity and pragmatism. This change in part reflects the environment of the second phase
of the revolutionary era, 1984-1990, a period of intensification of the Contra war and
deteriorating economic circumstances. In part it also reflects the broadly consultative
process through which the new Nicaraguan constitution was drafted. Thus the education-
related articles of the 1987 Constitution reflect growing opposition and public sentiment in
favor of less ideological public education, bolstered by principles of freedom in instruction,
and of parents' right to select either private or public schools for their children. In Title VII
of the 1987 Constitution one finds these explicit affirmations:

ARTICLE 116. "Education has as its objective the full and integral
development of Nicaraguans; to provide them with a critical, scientific, and
humanist way of thinking; to develop their personality and their sense of
dignity to prepare them to assume the tasks of common interest demanded for
the progress of the nation. Education is a fundamental factor for the transformation and development of the individual and the society.

**ARTICLE 117.** Education is one single, democratic, creative, and participatory process, which promotes scientific research and links theory with practice and manual with intellectual labor. It is based on our national values, in the knowledge of our history, reality, national universal culture, and the continual development of science and technology; it cultivates the values of the new Nicaraguan in accord with the principles established in this Constitution, the study of which must be promoted.

**ARTICLE 118.** The state promotes the participation of the family, community, and people in education and guarantees the support of the means of social communication for this purpose;

**ARTICLE 119.** Education is the irrenouncable function of the state. Planning, organization, and direction of education is the responsibility of the state. The national education system functions in an integrated fashion and in accordance with national plans. Its organization and function are determined by law.

**ARTICLE 120.** The creative application of educational plans and policies is a fundamental role of the national teaching profession. Teachers have the right to standards of living and work in accord with their dignity and the important social function that they carry out; they shall be promoted and given incentives in accordance with the law.

**ARTICLE 121.** All Nicaraguans have free and equal access to education. Basic education is free and obligatory. The Communities of the Atlantic Coast have access in their region to education in their national language at the levels determined in accord with national plans and programs.

**ARTICLE 123.** Private education centers may function at all levels, subject to the precepts established in this Constitution.

**ARTICLE 124.** Education in Nicaragua is secular. The state recognizes the right of private educational centers with a religious orientation to impart religion as an extracurricular subject" (Blausten and Gisbert, 1987: pp. 24-25).

These articles contain some contradictory language, a phenomenon not uncommon in constitutions. For example, (1) the Constitution encourages the integration of the teacher, the family, the community, and the society at large in the education process while the state remains the planner, director, and organizer of education. (2) The Constitution emphasizes
the importance of individuality despite occurring within the ideological framework of a normally state-oriented leftist philosophy. The Constitution also contains historic language affecting education. "For the first time in the history of the country, it [the Constitution] recognizes that Nicaragua is a multi-ethnic nation (Article 8), grants official status to the languages of the Atlantic Coast (Article 11), and recognizes that the development of the region's cultures enriches the national culture" (Arno: 1994, p. 48).

Phases of Education Policy:

Overlapping Actions and Fragmented Accomplishments

Not all Nicaraguans benefitted educationally from the first phase of the revolution, particularly on the Atlantic coast and in other rural areas. Carlos Vilas (1989) argues that, after a revolutionary movement comes to power, it can develop and implement programs either from above, or work with the regions and those regions' leaders who held credibility in pre-revolutionary times. The latter strategy would be the more practical because it would constitute an admission that these persons hold some legitimacy locally. In the Nicaraguan Atlantic coastal region, such local elites would have been trusted by the local population because of their ethnic identity and because they would have had access to decisions and implementation of policy (p. 194).

The Sandinistas forged just such an initial alliance with traditional leadership in the Atlantic zone, according to Vilas, which helped legitimize the revolution and compensates in a way for the lack of legitimacy emanating from a popular insurrection or from a prolonged struggle against oppressive powers or foreign domination. Decentralization of education was a partial way in which the Ortega regime applied this principle. (p. 194)
The development of new educational opportunities in neglected areas, paralleling the state's greater communication with the local community, provided the revolution a means to implement change and temper social differences. What is significant about this policy is that it demonstrates that the regime was truly seeking to respond to the needs and aspirations of the Atlantic region instead of merely advancing the revolutionary regime's own needs. This task was not easy.

Decades of mistrust, neglect, led the Atlantic peoples to form MISURASATA. The acronym stood for Miskitos, Sumus, Ramas, and Sandinistas working together. Founded in November 1979, the organization wanted specific tasks to be accomplished by the new revolutionary government. Among these tasks would be: "the diffusion of their language and culture, the reconstruction of their history, collaboration with government literacy, education and development programs, and learning Spanish." (Vilas, 1989: p. 121-122). On education particularly, it declared that "teaching should be done in the native languages in the first five years and then gradually changing to a bilingual system." (p. 122). In August 1980, the Ministry of Education developed a special literacy program in both English and the Indian languages. "The ministry's decision went beyond MISURASATA's demand which only referred to Indian languages...and the Council of State passed a law promoting bilingual education in the languages of the Atlantic Coast. The law authorized kindergarten and basic primary education in Miskito and Creole English in the villages with gradual introduction of Spanish." (p. 123). Between 1979 and 1983 the number of teachers Special Zone 1, in which this area was included, grew 116 percent and the number of students enrolled grew 226 percent (p. 111). By July, 1986, special elections for councils were held in the Atlantic region as a mechanism to allow some local autonomy. The tasks of these councils included "building schools, supporting bilingual programs, and encouraging people
fighting with counterrevolutionary forces to return to their villages" (p. 174). The efforts were to help build a new trust. The revolution promised a new Nicaragua where "all people would be one." This affirmation confused and worried the Atlantic peoples and thus required a new dialogue with the Sandinistas. If they had been considered outcasts by the Somoza regime, were they now to amalgamated into society to the extent that their heritage would be lost? The Atlantic coastal peoples sought a middle ground, as the Sandinistas also did -- at least initially.

Should regime-community trust erode, the state might, in pursuit of its short term goals, augment its control in order to establish obedient relationships rather than sharing responsibility and decision making. Indeed, this is precisely what happened in the Atlantic region later in the revolution as Contra activity increased. The government relocated much of the Miskito population away from the Honduran border. Michael Conroy (1987) corroborates Vilas' observations, suggesting that before the 1979 revolution there was minimal state interest in the provision of social services to the Atlantic Zone. The Somoza regime had been oriented mainly toward a special clientele -- those who could pay. Early in the revolution, what really changed the content of education was "not so much decrees from above, couched in institutional terms, as it was the involvement of an enormous number of people at the grassroots level outside Managua, who took it upon themselves to see that basic social services would be made available to the poor majority" (pp. 20-21).

A 1983 study by J.B. Bernal highlights the Sandinistas' interest in the regionalization of education in Nicaragua and in community input into education policy and administration. Bernal examined several Latin American countries' attempts at this kind of education decentralization. He identified these countries' objectives for regionalization as well as the policy areas to which regionalization would be applied. Under the objectives of
regionalization Bernal lists the following: (1) to introduce reforms in both the context and the role of education, (2) to facilitate popular participation in education, (3) to increase the accessibility of education, (4) to rationally use national and local resources by decentralizing both administrative tasks and levels of operation, and (5) to encourage "inter-sector" (within region) relations.

Bernal lists among the policy areas in which regionalization would be applied as curriculum, administration, and a process termed "national regionalization." Bernal found that Nicaragua, under the Sandinistas, unlike most other countries in Latin America, was pursuing all these goals of regionalization (p. 53). Regionalization of education, Bernal says, "assumes greater access of base groups to education decisions which affect objectives, content, administration, and resources destined for teaching" (p. 55). I would argue that this effort had a double rationale. It was a way to accommodate groups other than FSLN members and supporters, but it was also a way to keep FSLN goals for education intact. It seems to have been a risky strategy in either case.

The decentralization by way of regionalization was a dynamic change instituted by the Sandinista regime. It recognized the value of individuality within the ideological framework of a leftist philosophy generally associated with central control. With respect to the integrative aspect of education, the ten year revolutionary era confronted a basic dilemma of unequal development within the society and unequal implementation of policy. The shift in 1982 from 15 departments under central control to a system of six regions and three special zones meant far more interaction between the central ministry's work and both the regional delegates of the educational planning commissions and regional government officials (Conroy, 1987: p. 27). In 1983 a further refinement occurred with the integration of administrative and political jurisdictions. This restructuring became final in 1984.
These changes paralleled a similar restructuring of the Sandinista Front (FSLN). This had the effect in education of minimizing the further development of parallel administrative and political organizations on a hierarchical basis, extending from center to periphery—this particular situation developed by the Sandinista leadership to meet its own needs for flexibility and control stands in marked contrast to the problems presented by parallel organizational structures in state administration and in Communist parties of various Eastern European states. (p. 28)

Conroy suggests that such innovation, lacking in Romania, Poland, and Yugoslavia, was effective in Nicaragua because it established better communication links among FSLN leaders, government education administrators, and their social bases in mass organizations (p. 29). For education this arrangement also meant for education an increased "articulation between state, party, and society. Education was not simply the acquisition of knowledge in a variety of subject matter areas, but political education designed to enhance the individual's view of internal and external societal relations" (p. 29).

These structural changes allowed greater financial autonomy in the regions, as well as greater autonomy in educational activity. "The consequence of these innovations was a new set of administrative practices, responding to Nicaraguan conditions, independent of the predetermined ideological categories often applied to the regime in the external debate over the course of the Nicaraguan revolution" (p. 29).

One result of these revolutionary efforts between 1981 and 1984 was a more equitable distribution of educational services. At the primary and secondary level, in all six regions of the country the number of teachers and classrooms changed depending on need (Conroy, 1987: pp. 75-79). Conroy suggests that the government's emphasis was on redistribution of supply rather than of demand. "Increased enrollments are an important achievement in and of themselves, but they can be attained simply by crowding large
numbers of children into a constant number of schools with a constant number of teachers. The outreach of the Revolution is more accurately measured in its ability to supply schools, schoolrooms, and teachers to meet the latent demand for education" (p. 71).

Martin Carnoy (1986) reminds us, however, that an ongoing problem for Nicaraguan education was it was a "transitional state" -- one in which both the political structures and the economic structures are usually in flux:

Education as a democratizing force results in the expansion of mass education and more equal access to (the democratization of) knowledge. Education as a capitalist reproductive force requires controls on access and limits educational expansion. (p. 65)

Carnoy argues that the struggle for less educational hierarchy and more participation in curricula was really a struggle for more power by forces of democratization against forces of those who would support no change from the Somoza years (p. 77). Simply put, the revolutionary leaders still had to placate certain business elites who wished to restrict education, and to deal simultaneously with other pressures to expand education. More democratic education would promote a spirit of equity. Yet, capitalism would tend to promote inequality. This mixed message complicates the development of education in an underdeveloped nation.14

Carnoy (1986) suggests that the state in transition wants to give new meaning to citizenship that is essentially political and "socio-collective" rather than market oriented and individualistic.

14 The argument here is that if rapid educational expansion, especially for primary education, is not carefully engineered and is not in synchrony with the expectations for jobs, there may be conflict in the short and medium run (Carnoy and Samoff, p. 74).
Mass education serves this ideological objective by bringing all the population into direct contact with the state's ideological apparatus especially in societies where market and private capital continue to exist alongside more collective forms of production and distribution--yet even in almost totally collectivized economies, the continual role of the traditional family and social hierarchies (as in China and Tanzania, for example) or the family and the Church (Nicaragua) or a nearby hostile presence (Cuba, Nicaragua, Mozambique), all appear to make mass education an ideological instrument crucial for legitimizing the transition state. (p. 75)

General Education Policy:

Three Periods of Change

Carlos Tunnerman (1984) discusses education in the early revolutionary era (1979-1984). In particular, he observes that more people and more groups became involved in policy making, and that there were more beneficiaries than there had been during the Somoza era. Tunnerman believed that people were educating themselves through the revolutionary spirit, for him a "war of liberation from ignorance." He advocated that the people should shape education policy rather than rely solely upon government to do so. Nevertheless, political and institutional power were also necessary for projects such as the Literacy Crusade and the writing of its text geared to lessons of the revolution. The teacher shortage required Nicaragua to adopt a community-based strategy to anchor popular education (Tunnerman, 1984). By 1984, 400,000 Nicaraguans had gone through basic literacy training.

Juan Arrien (1989) divides revolutionary education policy into three distinct periods: 1979-1984 is the first, with the Ortega administration then subdivided into two epochs -- 1984-1986 and 1987-1988. Arrien argues that a series of popular and political educational
policy successes marked the 1979-1984 period. Influenced by 1920s anti-imperialist rebel Augusto César Sandino's pedagogical ideas, this stage was highly productive. There were still few serious distractions from the Contras or the United States. The CNA reduced illiteracy from 50.3 percent to 12.9 percent. Enrollment at the primary and secondary levels averaged a 9.8 percent growth rate, disabled children were included in instruction, and the number of all "certified teachers" rose from 13,043 in 1978 to 17,531 in 1983 (p. 151-152).

Tunnerman (1984) asserts that in this first period 1,400 new schools were built, but 116,000 children still had no school to attend. Two thousand Cubans came to help train teachers. By 1984, the expectation was that all the Cuban teachers would be able to leave by 1986. This was predicated on Nicaragua having created a bigger, more qualified teacher corps.

The main revolutionary interest between 1979 and 1984 was to promote three main things: (1) quantitative enlargement of education services in order to make the "right" of education a reality to more Nicaraguans, (2) qualitative improvements to educational levels, eg. better education, and (3) a transformation of education.

Each goal moved at its own pace. Tunnerman (1984) argued that it was easier to expand services than improve or reform them, yet all these things had to be done. He listed twenty-five accomplishments of primary and secondary education during the 1979-1984 period:

**Period One (1979-1984)**

**Expansion: More Education**

1. Substantial increase of the resources concerning education. The budget for the educational sector passed from 341 millions (of córdobas) in 1978 to 1,487 millions in 1983, rising to some 4 percent of the GDP and more than 10 percent of the national budget.
2. "The National Literacy Crusade reduced the illiteracy rate from 50.8 percent to 12.9 per cent. For the Atlantic Coast region, it was conducted in the native languages of Miskito, Sumo, and Creole. As a result 12,664 persons were alphabetized in that region.

3. A training program for the cultural and pedagogical improvement for 8,000 "popular teachers" (receiving training outside a formal institution).

4. Free public education for all levels of schooling plus control of private schools’ fees and tuition were instituted.

5. Student registration at all levels doubled from 500,000 to a million persons.

6. Incorporation of pre-school into the state system was begun. Before the revolutionary triumph, only 9,000 children were in preschool. The number rose to 50,000 by 1984. Three hundred and seventy preschool classrooms were annexed to primary schools, 34 were annexed to rural development centers, 60 centers of preschool and six preschool community centers were established for people who lived in marginal suburban and rural areas.

7. Incorporation of special education for disabled children occurred with the creation of 25 new schools around the country. During the Somoza regime less than 500 disabled children had received this type of education.

8. The creation of 4,000 new primary teaching positions, and nearly 2,000 new primary schools, mainly in rural areas. Before the revolution there were only 12,706 teachers from all public levels, by 1984 there were 41,593.

9. Eight new normal schools were established in addition to the five that had already existed. These new teacher training schools were built in Juigalpa, Bluefields, Siuna, León, Chinandega, Matagalpa, Rivas, and San Carlos to better distribute teacher training.
10. Twenty-one high school teaching institutes were constructed in accordance with the II Education Project NIC/BIRF and 19 more with national and communal resources. They were more equitably located throughout the region.

11. Nearly 200,000 school desks and other furniture, chairs and tables, were distributed for the primary level.

12. 1,252 new school centers have been constructed and 200 more repaired with an investment of 380.5 millions of córdobas. The number of units, that is new teaching spots, came to 2,639. This figure does not include the 16,975 Popular Education Collectives (CEP) working in various structures.

13. The Ministry of Education began to subsidize 126 private education centers, giving an annual contribution of 5.6 million córdobas. About 20 agreements were signed by the Ministry with religious schools located in poorer suburbs. In these cases the Ministry assumed all expenses making them free, public and mixed centers, where Christian teaching is kept.

Improvement: Better Education

1. Secondary Technical Education was reactivated by providing equipment to multiple workshops of 99 primary and secondary school centers.

2. The Ministry of Education established a Department of Orientational, Occupational, and Vocational Formation. Its tasks included work study programs, and motivational workshops for student and parents.

3. Consolidation of education in several rural educative nuclei occurred in the departments of Boaco (4) Chinandega (1) Chontales (4) León (2) Madriz (2) Nueva Segovia (3) Matagalpa (1) Rivas (1) and Zelaya (1). These joined together 257 schools, where 32,232 primary school students are attended to by 956 teachers. These established a preschool-to- ninth-grade complex near where the
people live and in which mass organizations could participate.

4. Thirty-four libraries were created in connection with the "Carlos Fonseca Campaign for Libraries." Books and resources were collected every year to improve national libraries.

5. The Communal Educational Development Program (PRODECO) was created for the most abandoned and rural areas. Its aim was to create communal orchards, cooperatives, and workshops where agricultural skills would be learned and applied.

6. The number and frequency of hours of mathematics and science at the secondary level was increased.

7. The regime implemented a plan to have a regular inspection of the inventory of schools and their physical plants. There has also been the installation of physics, chemistry and biology laboratories.

Transformation: New Education

1. The Ministry of Education established educational representatives in the different regions of the country.

2. New sections and departments of the Ministry of Education were created to improve its functioning.

3. The National Councils for General and Adult Education were created for the participation of the mass organizations and the most interested sectors in the educational development area as advisors to the Ministry of Education.

4. The government began to develop a National Plan for integral education, and began to transform at the first grade level, programs, textbooks, methodologies, and phonics as a means to more easily reach children.

5. There were workshops for evaluating plans and teachers. Teachers gathered in their corresponding cities every two months to exchange educational experiences. At the same time ANDEN, the teachers
organization, was in charge of political and ideological training of teachers.

Juan Arrien (1989), author of the definitive work on the education policies of the revolutionary era, argues that this first period, 1979-1984 was productive, and euphoric. Arrien viewed its accomplishments to be the provision of free education, uniform programming, binding the society together emotionally, and articulating the needs of the people through the "raised fist" logo of the revolution. The fundamental components of this stage were to transform education, respond to all interests of the society (unlike Somoza), and combine philosophy, politics, and pedagogy. Supported by the Ministry of Education, the public school teachers' union (ANDEN) assumed the lead in this popular education project. ANDEN's role in education policy would increase still further after 1984 (pp. 155-156).

Arrien, however, also notes flaws in the National Reconstruction Government's intentions. He suggests that the government erred by (1) deciding education objectives before structures of government and implementation were in place, (2) not relating the phonics programs to a sequence of programs for instructional continuity's sake, (3) promoting children into higher grade levels before appropriate curriculum changes were finalized, and (4) tolerating a general lack of discipline for students and teachers. By 1984 the Contra war began to exacerbate these deficiencies. Data reveal that 98 adult education workers were murdered, 171 of them were kidnapped by the Contras, and 15 primary school teachers were murdered and 16 wounded. The Contras also forced the closure of 840 adult education centers and 354 schools, destroying 14 schools in raids (Interpress Service, May 9, 1985).
Examples of other contradictions both between the opposing forces in Nicaragua and within the FSLN itself during the entire revolutionary period were the following: (1) economic and education policies which favored the capitalist classes meant that a proportionate amount of money was not allocated to egalitarian goals. These policies antagonized the peasantry, which was the primary base for the FSLN. (2) Sandinista Youth and the Ministry of Education were at odds over the traditional bureaucratic nature of education. "Suggesting that these tensions came to a head in 1983, these youth and popular educators pressed for an educational overhaul lessening the control of the technocrats and the traditional teaching staffs" (Arno, 1994: p. 41). There were also other points of basic internal dissension.

Marked tensions [existed] within the FSLN over the role of the party in educational decision-making and within the government between the state security apparatus and the professionals in charge of the Ministry of Education. According to the first Sandinista Minister of Education, Carlos Tunnerman, the FSLN party secretaries for the MED attempted to dictate both to him and his successor, father Fernando Cardenal. Tunnerman requested the intervention of the party secretary for Managua, Commander María Tellez, to clarify the distinction between government and party and to give Tunnermann the full support of the FSLN in running the Ministry. (p. 42)


Between 1984 and 1986, Fernando Cardenal replaced Carlos Tunnerman as Minister of Education. Cardenal had to confront the grave austerity measures that became necessary as the Contra war worsened. The war required communities to increase voluntary popular participation in education. In order to maintain the progress of education, the Nicaraguan people would have to sustain the momentum of a revolutionary education policy. Arrien believed that this would have been the only way to institutionalize education, making it a
valuable permanent right in the minds of the society. In this period of so called "popular education," the popular teacher (maestros populares) would emerge. During the period education resources diminished sharply, caused by reallocation of public resources to respond to the increasing Contra insurgency. Education planners hoped that under such circumstances an institutionalization of education might help institutionalize the revolution itself. This hope proved vain.

Period Three (1987-1990)

The new 1987 Nicaraguan Constitution set the parameters for the Ortega administration's general educational policies from 1987 through 1990. The impoverishment of education deepened as criticism of the regime rose and foreign aid deteriorated while demands for education and educational policy change increased. A 20 percent decrease in the national education budget did not, however, reduce enrollments, although dropouts remained an aggravating problem. In 1988, the drop out rate was 23 percent; 17 percent of the children failed at least one grade, 145,000 children were still not served and there was a partial reversal of the previous success of the 1980 Literacy Campaign. Roughly 400,000 of those affected positively by the campaign had regressed in their ability to read because of a lack of reading usage. Finally, in this third period all agencies of education, national education boards, and national systems of training were consolidated and personnel cuts occurred (pp. 167-174).

Arrien writes that between 1979 and 1989 opinion about education diverged among supporters of the revolution. An original set of principles had been enumerated in the Historic Program of the FSLN (1982). By 1985, ideologues still argued that those revolutionary principles must be kept alive, while others criticized them sharply. Many critics eventually denounced the FSLN's principles as merely another, left-wing version of
Somocismo. They criticized the revolutionary principles as elitist in nature, and argued that they limited liberty and competitive thought within the schools (Arrien, 1989: p. 363).

Domestic criticism of education policy in Nicaragua created conflict and tensions even within the revolutionary party itself. Armove (1994) suggests that in societies undergoing radical changes such dissonance is not unusual. A primary contradiction "in the revolutionary process was that between the principle of mass participation in societal decision-making and the [presence of some] top-down steering by a vanguard party that knew what was in the best interest of the people" (p. 204).

A belief in the all knowing abilities of its National Directorate led the party and its mass organization affiliates to exercise undue sectarian influence over educational policy and practice and stifle dissenting points of view at all levels of the education system. By 1988, however, the FSLN began to moderate its doctrinaire positions in education, as in the political sphere, in order to advance the peace process. (p. 204)

Expansion of Group Input and Policy:

Teachers as Activists

ANDEN, the pro-Sandinista teachers union, served as a facilitator and mobilization instrument. The organization kept revolutionary political education going amid the normal academic mission of the schools. ANDEN's mobilization of popular creative thinking workshops, was a means of applying Paulo Freire's pedagogical approach. His methodology emphasized reciprocity of learning between teacher and student, rather than knowledge being imparted only by the teacher. Over time, groups and political parties other than the Sandinistas began to view the education movement as less and less inclusive and more of an exclusively Sandinista project. The union seemed to close ranks with the regime, lending credibility to this criticism.
Arrien (1989) argues that ANDEN's pivotal role occurred in both policy making and policy implementation. It enjoyed direct ties to the FSLN and to the Ministry of Education as part of the Ortega administration. ANDEN also worked with (briefed) National Assembly members and assisted the Education Ministry's lobbying of the National Assembly. As an organization, ANDEN held a higher status than other organizations involved in education, including the Sandinista Youth, local political figures, and regional leaders. ANDEN's political roles included defending the revolution, inculcating revolutionary ideology, promoting austerity in education service delivery, and promoting the "student-educator" (p. 406).

ANDEN also developed "good student programs" to reduce drop outs, gave awards for grade completions, and supervised popular teachers (maestros populares). These were the field trained teachers -- not college trained but instrumental in delivering both schooling and the revolution's message of popular education.

Helen Collinson (1990) writes that the increased inclusion of women in the education process constituted a pronounced change from the Somoza years. Before 1979 schooling for girls had been particularly inadequate. Gladys Martinez, a coordinator of the Barrio Committee in Clavarito, León remembers:

I was helping my mother in the bakery by the age of seven. As the oldest, I had to help her although that meant I often did not go to school. I got as far as the fourth grade. My mother's attitude was that she was too poor to get me a proper education so all she could do was teach me her profession, which is breadmaking. (p. 122)

In contrast, by the second phase of the revolutionary era women comprised 60 percent of the teachers (a substantial increase in their numbers over the Somoza era) and were instrumental in establishing the Popular Education Collectives (CEP) during the revolution. The CEPs
worked with those who, for whatever reason, had not benefitted directly from the National Literacy Campaign. Under the revolution women constituted the vast majority of teachers: 70 per cent in primary, 75 percent in secondary, 55 percent in university, and 95 percent in popular education for adults (p. 132).

In rural areas transportation difficulties made school attendance difficult and thus made universal education impossible. The burden fell most heavily on females. Parents were encouraged to attend school with their children and to come to orientation classes to show their children, particularly their daughters, the importance of going to school at the primary level (p. 126-128). At the secondary level, girls had a higher rate of attendance than boys, but girls were still not equals as demonstrated by the absence in the curriculum of anti-sexism literature, despite a plethora of anti-imperialist and anti-racist material. It seems quite likely that the increasingly heavy military draft, voluntary state service, and the exodus of young men from the country during the Contra war to avoid the draft all contributed significantly to the higher rate of female school attendance between 1985 and 1990.

**Political Strategies:**

**Education Finance Policy**

The data in Table 5.1 reveal several interesting general trends in Nicaragua during the revolutionary era, especially shifting role of the public sector within the economy. Nicaragua's population grew steadily and rapidly throughout the 1980s. GDP (Table 5.1, column 3) recovered somewhat from the war years of 1978-1979, but then stagnated for several years before declining precipitously in the late 1980s. Economic stagnation with a growing population, of course, meant that the overall national economic pie was shrinking on a per capita basis even before the deepened recession of the late 1980s. The revolutionary government's overall economic role in society (measured as overall government expenditure
expressed as a percent of GDP in Table 5.1 column 6) at first expanded rapidly from 1979, when the government spent 19.5 percent of GDP, to the state's spending over 50 percent of GDP for 1983-1985. Public spending (Table 5.1, column 4) and education spending (column 5) both grew rapidly into the mid 1980s. As is discussed at greater length below, however, the Contra war and the severe recession of the late 1980s, including drastic structural adjustment programs, brought down public spending (column 4) and forced the revolutionary government to significantly reduce its overall role within the economy (government's share of GDP -- Table 5.1 column 6) each year from 1986 on.

Analyzing Tables 5.1 and 5.2 together is instructive when one considers demographics, economic trends, and education spending per se. As noted, Table 5.1 reveals the rapid growth of the Nicaraguan public sector during the revolutionary era. Actual government expenditures (expressed in constant 1980 dollars -- Table 5.1, column 4) rose from 385.7 million dollars to 1,328.5 million dollars between 1979 and 1984—an increase of 244 percent. Actual education spending (Table 5.1, column 5) also rose dramatically—186 percent from 1979 through 1984. The most telling change in education effort by the revolutionary government in these early years may be seen in education spending as a percent of GDP, the best measure of overall national economic energy devoted to education (Table 5.1, column 8). There one notes that from 1979 through 1984 the revolutionary government increased the education budget's share of the GDP from 2.5 to 6.3 percent—a 150 percent growth in the share of overall economic resources devoted to education. The revolution, then, made a marked effort to improve and expand education activities, measured in spending terms, in comparison to the levels seen under Somoza.

Although fragmentary for 1985-1990, the data reveal the impact of the economic crises and Contra war on education spending. First, beginning in 1985 the economy began
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1978.3</td>
<td>385,700</td>
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<td>2.47</td>
<td>3069.5</td>
<td>856,300</td>
<td>90,700</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
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<td>2.69</td>
<td>2180.5</td>
<td>699,900</td>
<td>82,500</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>11.8</td>
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<td>93,300</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>10.2</td>
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<td>2.90</td>
<td>2262.5</td>
<td>1,251,100</td>
<td>107,500</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>2271.1</td>
<td>1,328,500</td>
<td>140,800</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>3.11</td>
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<td>1986</td>
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<td>2114.4</td>
<td>1,055,000</td>
<td>123,400</td>
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<td>11.7</td>
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<td>2099.5</td>
<td>951,000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1870.0</td>
<td>820,900</td>
<td>71,100**</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>8.7**</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1816.1</td>
<td>562,900</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1736.0</td>
<td>812,400</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>Growth 1979-1984</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>244%</td>
<td>186%</td>
<td>200%</td>
<td>-17%</td>
<td>152%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth 1984-1989</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>-38%</td>
<td>-50%</td>
<td>-25%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>-40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Represents only Ministry of Education Expenditures

** Estimates from GDP and known percent expenditures on education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pop. (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Primary &amp; Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Primary Enrollment</th>
<th>Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Total Teachers: Primary &amp; Secondary</th>
<th>Primary Teachers</th>
<th>Secondary Teachers</th>
<th>Total Primary &quot;Schools&quot; (not structures)</th>
<th>Ratio of all Students to Teachers</th>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>522,041</td>
<td>411,315</td>
<td>110,726</td>
<td>14,838</td>
<td>11,307</td>
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<td>2.47</td>
<td>643,240</td>
<td>503,497</td>
<td>139,743</td>
<td>18,334</td>
<td>14,113</td>
<td>4,221</td>
<td>4,954</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.69</td>
<td>643,240</td>
<td>503,497</td>
<td>139,743</td>
<td>18,334</td>
<td>14,113</td>
<td>4,221</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>649,197</td>
<td>509,240</td>
<td>139,957</td>
<td>18,208</td>
<td>14,105</td>
<td>4,103</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>36.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>649,851</td>
<td>536,656</td>
<td>158,215</td>
<td>20,666</td>
<td>15,639</td>
<td>5,027</td>
<td>5,221</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>696,062</td>
<td>534,317</td>
<td>161,745</td>
<td>23,983</td>
<td>17,969</td>
<td>6,014</td>
<td>5,221</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>712,820</td>
<td>561,551</td>
<td>151,269</td>
<td>21,650</td>
<td>16,872</td>
<td>4,778</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>33.1</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>675,939</td>
<td>556,684</td>
<td>119,055</td>
<td>21,236</td>
<td>17,199</td>
<td>4,037</td>
<td>4,260</td>
<td>32.1</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>716,458</td>
<td>583,725</td>
<td>132,733</td>
<td>21,931</td>
<td>18,137</td>
<td>3,794</td>
<td>3,010</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>772,065</td>
<td>599,957</td>
<td>172,108</td>
<td>27,723*</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4,768</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>739,566</td>
<td>595,612</td>
<td>143,954</td>
<td>23,514</td>
<td>18,746</td>
<td>4,768</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>784,841</td>
<td>632,882</td>
<td>151,959</td>
<td>23,790</td>
<td>19,022</td>
<td>4,768</td>
<td>4,030</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growth Rates 1979-84: 11% 33% 30% 46% 62% 59% 73% 5% -17%

Growth Rates 1984-90: 24% 17% 18% -6% -1% 6% -21% -23% +14%


* Estimated difference between 1987 and 1989 figures.
to contract steadily with GDP (Table 5.1 col. 3) falling by 1990 to only 76 per cent of its 1984 level in constant terms. Government spending, (Table 5.1, column 4) and government spending as a percentage of GDP (Table 5.1, column 6) began to contract in 1986 in reaction to economic difficulties of the era. Education was hard hit, its actual expenditures in 1988 (Table 5.1 col. 5) falling to only 51 percent of its 1984 level. Education spending as a per cent of GDP (Table 5.1, column 8) fell to 3.8 percent in 1988, down from a peak of 6.6 percent in 1986. All indicators are that this war-driven education spending contraction worsened in 1989-1990.

In contrast to the contraction of education spending levels during the Ortega administration after 1985, Table 5.2 reveals fairly steady increases in access to education across the entire revolutionary era. The total number of students (Table 5.2, column 2) rose 33 percent from 1979 through 1984, then another 17 per cent above the 1984 level by 1990. Primary enrollment (Table 5.2, col. 4) rose throughout the revolutionary era except for modest contractions in 1984 and 1986. Secondary enrollment jumped 46 percent through 1984, but rose and fell dramatically afterward, finishing the 1984-1990 period with a 6 percent overall loss. The toll of the war is evident here, as many young men fled Nicaragua to avoid military service in the Contra war, and many others were conscripted into the Sandinista Popular Army or the Militia.

The size of the teacher corps shot up from 1979 to 1984 -- 59 percent more primary teachers and 73 percent more secondary teachers (Table 5.2). After 1984 the impact of the war was greatest on secondary teachers, whose numbers declined by 21 percent by 1990. Schools in operation (Table 5.2, column 9) also dropped 23 percent from 1984 to 1990, while the student-to-teacher ratio rose from 29 to 33.
In summary then, expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP experienced considerable growth in the ten year revolutionary era. The Ortega administration managed, despite sharp contractions in education spending after 1984, to keep overall enrollment and the number of teachers growing. It is reasonable to surmise, and supported by anecdotal evidence, however, that the quality of instruction, school supplies, maintenance, and instructional materials all must have suffered great declines after 1985. Student-to-teacher ratios (Table 5.2, column 3 divided by column 6) decreased from 35:1 in 1979 to a low of 29:1 in 1984, but then climbed rapidly back up to 33:1 for the 1985-1990 years.

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 indicate the emphasis placed on rural education, specifically the increase of rural teachers, popular teachers, rural primary school enrollment, and the somewhat more balanced urban/rural school distribution prior to 1985. In most instances, there was pervasive growth. The 1978-1988 growth in the number of teachers (Table 5.4) in rural areas was 135 percent (from 914 rural teachers to 2,148). After 1983 in most of the same categories by region, there is either decline or very little growth.

The cost of defense against the Contras, a contracting economy, and a highly volatile inflation gave the Ortega administration enormous problems after 1984, creating new constraints upon the revolution. As war and debt pushed Nicaragua near bankruptcy, Tunnerman (1992) argues, Nicaragua continued to have considerable success in both general education policies and education finance until the sharp 1988 economic downturn and even more stringent austerity programs. In pre 1988 Nicaragua, free education was available at all levels, rural primary school enrollment increased by 50 percent, the level of preschool education increased from 9,000 in 1978 to 74,000 in 1988 (24 percent of these preschool children in rural areas). From 1979-1984 1,404 new schools were built with 3,534 classrooms primarily in rural areas. Between 1979-1986 3,934 other new classrooms were built and teachers' salaries by July, 1984 had doubled. Free distribution of school
supplies and a complete restructuring of the educational system had taken place with nine basic grades as the backbone of the new system (pp. 2-3).

But the last two full years of the revolution, 1988 and 1989, exposed a somber reality. Key economic indicators declined. The mystique of the revolution had faded. Officials of the Ministry of Education faced considerable cuts in the education budget, made because of defense needs. Education had lost its priority.

**TABLE 5.3**

**RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, TEACHERS**

**NICARAGUA: 1979 - 1988**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary School Students (Rural)</th>
<th>Primary School Teachers (Rural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>170,593</td>
<td>4,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>201,345</td>
<td>5,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>201,345</td>
<td>5,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>211,236</td>
<td>5,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>217,045</td>
<td>6,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>211,786</td>
<td>6,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>244,828</td>
<td>7,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>218,085</td>
<td>7,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>234,639</td>
<td>8,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>257,464</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>50% (1979-88)</td>
<td>93% (1979-87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5.4
"PRIMARY SCHOOLS 4th GRADE OR LESS (<), 4th GRADE OR MORE (>)

| Year | Urban and Rural | | | Urban | | | Rural | | |
|------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|      | Urban           | Rural           | Pacific Region  | Other Regions   | Pacific Region  | Other Regions   |
|      | Nation          | Nation          | Region          | Other Regions   | Region          | Other Regions   |
|      |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| 1978 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Total| 2402            | 1668            | 1202            | 688             | 1200            | 980             |
| <4th grade| 819            | 754             | 299             | 425             | 520             | 491             |
| >4th grade| 1583           | 914             | 903             | 914             | 680             | 489             |
| 1983 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Total| 4061            | 3444            | 1803            | 1376            | 2258            | 2068            |
| <4th grade| 1586           | 1507            | 543             | 493             | 1043            | 1014            |
| >4th grade| 2475           | 1937            | 1260            | 883             | 1245            | 1054            |
| 1988 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Total| 3918            | 3312            | 1782            | 1385            | 2136            | 1927            |
| <4th grade| 1241           | 1164            | 444             | 407             | 797             | 757             |
| >4th grade| 2677           | 2148            | 1338            | 978             | 1339            | 1170            |

Source: Arrien's Juan. 1989 Nicaragua Diez Años de Educación en la Revolución.
Despite dramatic achievements in education, there remained sobering problems. About 100,000 children still remained outside the school system even in the best times of the decade. In 1989 the number of unschooled was 150,000, 24 percent of the school age children. The illiteracy rate -- lowered so much by the great literacy crusade -- had risen again from 12 percent to 25 percent because one quarter of new school-age children were not in school and because newly literate adults did not receive follow-up literacy training. Despite the creation of more normal schools, large numbers of their graduates did not teach, and many teachers left the profession. This is one of the most disappointing legacies of the revolutionary era. Efforts at teacher development proved ineffective, and salaries remained inadequate and unattractive (Tunnerman, 1992, pp. 3-6).

Education Strategies: Analyzing the Results

The hypothesis in chapter three asserts that this leftist regime would have politicized education through expansive policies, restricting neither general education nor education finance. In the case of the Nicaraguan revolutionary era, 1979-1990, the evidence suggests this to be true. Further, the expansion efforts in general education policy and education finance were affected in all ways by the Sandinistas' ideologically hybrid revolution:

1. The bourgeoisie was taken into account in education policy out of economic necessity, but the primary beneficiary of education was to be the society as a whole. For the state, the inculcation of revolutionary principles was a central element of education reform. Although the revolutionary regime was the primary actor, provisions were made to include the community, teacher, church, and parents. Nevertheless, the motives of the government -- constrained by the goals of the revolution -- were highly suspect to some of the opposing political parties, organizations, and members of the Catholic Church.
(2) The regime did not consolidate its political power through its control over education. The rigid policy process from the Somoza regime had virtually required opening that process. As a result, sharp debate and widespread disgruntlement over the role of education ensued, particularly in light of the divisions over the meaning of the revolution.

(3) The peculiar mixture of Freireian pedagogical theory, plus community pressure to widely distribute education, revealed the ideological diversity of the coalition-based revolutionary regime and generated disagreements over curriculum.

(4) Attempting to integrate the revolution with the society on a permanent basis, the regime decentralized and regionalized education. This decision was atypically liberal for a leftist regime. This effort, of course, involved some contradictions because the FSLN did not wish completely to relinquish control of education to communities.

(5) The revolution made considerable progress in education in terms of literacy, school enrollments, teacher/student ratios, and spending as a result of its education policy. As a percentage of GDP and of government spending, expenditures on education were proportionally much higher than under Somoza. The revolution gained considerable ground with respect to the school-age population actually enrolled. I found no evidence to suggest misappropriation of education funds.

The revolution experienced setbacks in education. Literacy ultimately regressed because of fewer reading programs and the inability to reach a large fraction of the newly developing school-age population. The Contra war forced a reduction in education spending, but not as soon as might have been expected. The cutoff of U.S. AID monies to Nicaragua in 1981, (not restored until after 1990) certainly affected the education effort negatively, though the precise impact is not clear.
I am left with the impression that, as in the Somoza era, education policy was isomorphic with the interests of the regime, but for different reasons. Somoza saw education as a threat and a hindrance to his power and acted accordingly to restrict access to both education policy making and educational services. The Sandinistas saw education not as a threat to their power, but rather a necessity to their own power as well as an essential good for Nicaraguan society. Accordingly they increased access to education policy making, and made educational services much more widely available than had Somoza.

With the 1990 election and a subsequent change in administrations, a different ideological orientation would emerge. Private education and local control of schools would become particularly visible issues in the next regime. The administration of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro would seek to disengage the state from education to some extent, heralding the value of community control of schools, but also would permit an education curriculum increasingly tinged with religion.
The February 25, 1990 electoral victory of the National Opposition Union (UNO) and its presidential candidate, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, began a new era for Nicaragua. UNO's 55 percent victory put this loosely structured center-right coalition into an ideological predicament similar to that of the FSLN government before it. Because of its diversity, UNO experienced internal conflict and did not ideologically consolidate anti-Somoza and anti-Sandinista groups. This chapter explores how education policy and finance changed from those of the revolution. Among these new directions were increased emphasis upon private education, promotion of Christian teachings in public schools, increased local control over schools, deletion of Sandinista political teachings, and the resumption of U.S. aid.

"Your highest purpose is to exorcise from the books, classrooms, and schools, all the evil taught during the ten years of revolution."
-Humberto Belli, Vice Minister of Education to teachers. (Barricada, Sept. 1990)

Stephen Schwartz (1992) argues that the post revolutionary era required the new UNO regime to build on the political bases responsible for its victory. First, the regime would have to insure that the people's initial 1979 struggle was not betrayed. Second, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro would have to create a transitional government powerful enough to rule but also avoid a "triumphalism that would give the Sandinistas a pretext for violent disruption" (p. 126). To accomplish these tasks, she would push to increase the legislature's powers, thus allowing the FSLN members of the National Assembly a real opportunity to thwart the executive. Further, she would promote "rule of law" as a standard
for government operations (pp. 132-133). Consolidating a government and setting a national policy agenda, however, would prove very difficult for President Chamorro.

Major legal and policy changes, including restructuring public education, were to be debated in the reconfigured 90 member Nicaraguan National Assembly, composed of very diverse ideological forces: 51 members from the 14 party UNO coalition, 38 Sandinistas, and one Social Christian member (Wilde 1990, p. 326). Paul Sigmund (1994) noted that in this "left-right-center assembly setting," the political compromises would likely require a "social democratic approach." This approach accepts the predominance of a market economy, but places it within a framework of strong unions and government promotion of education, health, housing, and employment programs (p. 472). Theoretically, with the threat of the Cold War gone, and with it the likelihood of getting substantial amounts of U.S. aid, conservative elites would have a hard time refusing a "social market economy."

The new government immediately experienced internal conflict that greatly complicated its work in all policy arenas, including education. President Chamorro's task of charting a course to reconcile with the FSLN and consolidate democracy proved controversial. The Transition Accords, signed in March, 1990 between UNO and the Sandinistas, effectively left power divided among Sandinista Humberto Ortega Saavedra, head of the army, UNO member Antonio Lacayo, Minister of the Presidency (and Violeta Chamorro's son-in-law), and UNO member Alfredo César, President-elect of the Nicaraguan National Assembly. Of these three men, Lacayo appeared to hold the most power. Oscar René Vargas (1992) argues, however, that when César was installed in the Assembly presidency, he used his office to attempt to shift power away from Lacayo and toward himself (FBIS September, 1992 p. 20), an initiative resisted by Lacayo. To be sure, this struggle for ascendancy within the UNO coalition government produced considerable rifts
over government policies. Indeed, because Alfredo César ascendant would have shifted the
government sharply to the ideological right, Vargas speculated that there might even occur
a rightist "take-over" that would "create a power structure based on a counter revolution to
restore old oligarchical structures and create Somozism without Somoza" (FBIS, September
23, 1992 p. 21).

The FSLN also began to develop fissures between 1990 and 1992. There arose
mistrust within the organization—serious arguments over how to defend the people's rights,
how to protect the jobs and educational opportunities established during the revolution in the
face of government budget cutting, austerity programs, and privatization schemes (FBIS,
November 12, 1992 p. 20).

Among the most contentious of Violeta Chamorro's decisions was her decision to
retain General Humberto Ortega, the brother of Daniel Ortega, to head the reorganized
Nicaraguan armed forces. Although the decision to keep Ortega made considerable sense in
terms of promoting stability by easing the FSLN's fears of retaliation, the action was
repugnant to much of UNO and to the United States. Another controversial policy thrust of
the Chamorro government was the effort to dismantle the revolutionary era's public
education policies and to reverse parts of both their message and their achievements. This
considerably antagonized the FSLN.

Looking back, one may see that the regime's enthusiasm to redirect education in 1990
constituted one highly visible means to improve Nicaragua's relations with the United States
and to curry U.S economic aid. The United States had directly and indirectly supported
UNO in the 1980's. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) had underwritten some
elements of the eventual UNO electoral coalition as early as 1983 in anticipation of the 1984
elections. As a private organization that administers funds from the U.S. Congress and the
Agency for International Development (AID) to build democracies, NED directed two million dollars to several other groups in Nicaragua as well. Those monies supported civic education and the opposition newspaper *La Prensa*. In 1989 the United States openly supported and promoted the development of UNO, the selection of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro as its candidate, and the victorious UNO election campaign against FSLN presidential nominee and incumbent Daniel Ortega (Resource Center Bulletin: 1990).

Regime Ideology and U.S. Policy:

Education Strategies and Mixed Messages

If the ideological trademarks of the 1980s were Marxist politics and Freirian popular education (promoted without U.S. support for the regime's development programs), the post-revolutionary regime of the 1990s touted a political conservatism informed by Catholicism and private education (and won back at least cautious U.S. support for Nicaraguan development programs). When Chamorro took office in 1990, there were 315 religious and non-religious primary and secondary schools in Nicaragua. By 1993, the numbers had risen to 853 and were expected to continue to increase (Ministerio de Educación, 1994). This is not to say that the regime wanted fully to privatize public education. Rather, the regime sought to reconsider the role of the state as the predominant provider of education, a status it had assumed during the revolution. Moreover, the new government would reexamine the necessity of distributing free instructional materials to schools and the extension of education to poorer and rural areas of Nicaragua.

The 1990 appointments of Sofonías Cisneros Leiva and Humberto Belli de Pereria, two staunchly conservative Catholics, as Education Minister and Vice Minister respectively, was one clear indicator of impending change. Cisneros, was the former head of the Association of Christian School Parents, whose leaders allegedly had been arrested and
brutalized by the FSLN head of state security. He served as Minister of Education between 1990 and 1991. Belli was promoted to Cisneros' position at the end of 1991. However, the role of Cardinal Obando y Bravo would prove more significant still as a promoter of education policy change. Both UNO and the Sandinistas agreed that Obando held significant influence over the government of Violetta Chamorro. The Cardinal would take charge of reshaping the primary socialization tool of Nicaraguan society, public education. The reform of Nicaragua's public education system effectively was put in his hands (Woodward, 1990: p. 70).

Cardinal Obando's political goal was to purge the public education system of the revolutionary ideology as implemented by the Sandinistas and put conservative Catholic values in its place. In this manner the revolution's emphasis on the transforming critical consciousness of liberation and knowledge, espoused by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, would be redefined or abandoned. According to Katherine Grigsby, a former Vice Minister of Education in the late 1980's, "We doubt very much that they [the ministry of Education] would favor a method like Freire's, which leads to the development of a critical consciousness, a class position, organization, mobilization, and the transformation of reality. So it's [the education process] superficial, an education that reproduces knowledge, but not a creative, transforming, liberating education" (Friedman, 1992: p. 22).

Chamorro and Cardinal Obando, sharing the inaugural stage on April 25, 1990, symbolized the diversity of Nicaraguan politics. This stemmed in part from the assortment of groups that converged, if only temporarily in the mid 1970s to oust Somoza. As a member of an old and powerful Nicaraguan family, Chamorro symbolized the struggle for liberty for which her martyred husband, Pedro, was remembered. She was also the compromiser who had served for almost a year as a member of the revolution's National
Reconstruction Junta in 1979 and 1980 following the overthrow of Somoza. Finally, she was the opposition leader of the UNO coalition that had been forged from an eclectic array of anti-Sandinista forces. Cardinal Obando symbolized the political and spiritual power of the Church. He was the man who had falsely accused the revolutionary government of preventing Nicaraguans from attending church. He was a man who might well have become president were it not for the Vatican prohibition of such overt political service. Both Chamorro and Cardinal Obando would court public and private U.S. money for their respective agendas.

Initially Cardinal Obando had better luck than Chamorro in raising external contributions for Nicaragua. He garnered private monies by establishing networks with U.S. charismatic churches in Michigan. In 1990, he won the financial support of Thomas Monaghan, owner of the American firm Domino's Pizza and the Detroit Tigers baseball team. Monaghan chaired a two million dollar fundraising effort to replace Managua's cathedral, destroyed by the 1972 earthquake (Woodward, 1990). Chamorro, on the other hand, received a cautious initial response from the U.S. government to her request for aid. Her retention of Humberto Ortega as head of the armed forces caused the Bush administration between 1990 and 1992 to freeze certain U.S. assistance while continuing to provide other programs while the U.S. State Department studied Chamorro’s political strategy.

Antonio Lacayo, Nicaraguan Minister of the Presidency and Foreign Affairs Minister, Ernesto Leal, put the U.S. and Nicaraguan relationship in perspective in a May, 1993 interview with Reuters in Washington, D.C. Both men were in the city attending a symposium entitled "Nicaragua’s Search for a Democratic Consensus." They both argued that Nicaragua was undergoing a triple transition: (1) war to peace, (2) state owned
centralized economy to a free market economy, and (3) totalitarian authoritarianism to democracy. These difficult tasks, they argued, did not need micromanagement by the U.S. (Reuters Interview, May 14, 1993).

Lacayo and Leal argued that the property law and arbitration questions, about which the U.S. State Department had concerns, were progressing positively. Nicaragua was working to resolve the longstanding internal and external civil disputes associated with these cases. Leal and Lacayo further argued that Nicaragua deserved some slack from the United States because the Sandinista-dominated army had been reduced from 87,000 to 15,000 troops and that the military budget had been cut from 177 million córdobas in 1990 to 36 million córdobas by May, 1993. These military force and budget reductions would, they believed, allow investment in social programs.

Despite such pleadings by the Chamorro government, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Managua in 1992 resulted in the suspension of some U.S. aid because of Baker's ongoing concern about the property claims and about the progress of professionalization of the police force. The resultant suspension of some American foreign aid undermined several social and investment programs, aggravating the recipients and fomenting civil disorder. Something of a "Catch-22" was created. In a nutshell, Nicaragua would have to achieve a political consensus in order to get U.S. aid; but U.S. support appeared to be essential to shore up a political consensus (Reuters interview, May 14, 1993).

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15 Because the Sandinista government had confiscated and redistributed considerable property belonging to ex-Somocistas and others during the revolution, there existed a large number of disputed property claims in Nicaragua when the revolutionary government fell. The United States was pressing the Chamorro government for the speedy resolution the claims of U.S. citizens and residents who had such claims. Most of these U.S. citizens and residents were Nicaraguans who had gone into U.S. exile.
When there was aid, the regime seemed to rally the country toward hope of economic growth, development, and democratic change. When there was no aid, this hope seemed to diminish.

Interpress News stories corroborated Laycayo and Leal's observations. Washington had earmarked for Nicaragua funds totalling $581 million from 1990 to 1992 besides the AID monies. Similar amounts, of course, had been awarded between 1979 and 1989 to the Contras, the armed opposition of the FSLN-led government. Tomás Borge, an FSLN leader, noted that U.S. aid to Chamorro would be allocated to private enterprises, excluding peasants and small businessmen. In short, Borge interpreted U.S. aid as designed to undo the accomplishments of the revolution, not to develop the country. The U.S., according to Borge, had conditioned the release of aid for 1992, approximately $104 million, on the purging of FSLN members from decision making bodies in the Nicaraguan regime and other state agencies. The U.S. had clearly selected private businesses as primary recipients, along with the Salesians (a congregation of Catholics headed by Cardinal Obando), trade unions, and right wing radio stations.

Borge observed that $12 million were used to depoliticize revolutionary era textbooks at the same time that teachers were receiving miserable salaries. Five million dollars were earmarked for government vehicles, while only $1.5 million was set aside for medicine (Interpress Service. August 11, 1992). The electorate, according to the FSLN

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16 As a practical matter, under the Somoza regime, the U.S. offered aid with rarely a question asked; in the revolutionary era the U.S. supported the Contras and cut off aid to the revolutionary government. In 1990 under this more democratic regime, the U.S. offered only half-hearted support. It was not until the Clinton administration that the aid sanction was totally lifted.
leader, had been duped because the aid was essentially an instrument for interfering deeply in Nicaragua's affairs.

By spring of 1993 with the change in U.S. administrations, there was some indication from Washington that such "interference," eg. micromanagement of Nicaraguan affairs, would be reduced, letting Nicaragua resolve its own problems. In April 1993, Congressman Lee Hamilton, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the U.S. House of Representatives wrote Secretary of State Warren Christopher to urge that U.S. assistance to Nicaragua should favor the reconciliation process, regardless of party affiliation. Further it should apply to judicial reform, police training, multilateral programs, credit to small businesses, and should encourage the use of the proceeds from the privatization of state businesses for education and social concerns (Reuters Interview, May 14, 1993).

Continuing political turmoil within Nicaragua was exacerbated by ongoing U.S. interference in Nicaraguan politics and by the continuing uncertainty about U.S. aid. Toward the end of September 1992, the U.S. State Department, declared that it deplored incidents of murder and harassment of former resistance fighters reported to be underway in Nicaragua. The U.S. sent a team to follow up on that problem and to investigate allegations that President Chamorro was moving too slowly on all reforms. These charges grew out of a study by Republican staff members at the request of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, Republican Senator from North Carolina Jesse Helms. The report said that President Chamorro had been reduced to a figurehead while her son-in-law and Humberto Ortega, the brother of Daniel Ortega, "had the real power in that Central American country" (Chicago Sun Times, September 1992).

The claim that such U.S. interference might be damaging Nicaragua's future was made by figures on the right as well as the left. One example may be found in an interview
with Edén Pastora, originally a Sandinista military leader who later defected to become a maverick Contra leader:

Imagine organizing a party with the responsibility of organizing a country; first of all with no money, and then after Somoza-ism and the FSLN, when everybody is suspicious, frustrated, and feeling deceived or cheated, and from an economic viewpoint, nobody has any money. The only people left with any money are the FSLN leaders—thanks to an alliance between the U.S. and the FSLN to set up this joke of a government we have. Imagine the government of a lady with no party, with no deputies, and with no cogent ideological program. (FBIS. April 11, 1993 p. 19)

The ideology of the Chamorro regime was not clear, given that the original UNO coalition spanned parties from the far right to the left, and given that UNO began to fragment (especially from the far right) almost immediately upon assuming power. The regime itself was divided on strategy—symptomatic of its severe internal divisions. Vice President Virgilio Godoy led the rightmost faction, quickly emerging as an open opponent of Violeta Chamorro and Minister of the Presidency Antonio Lacayo. A rancorous debate ensued between advocates of concessions to keep programs going and those who wanted to give no quarter to striking teachers or other public sector workers, perceived allies of the Sandinistas. The latter position was articulated by Wilfredo Navarro, president of one right center party. "It seems strange to be reconciling with your enemies [rather] than with your allies. We need more than the absence of war. We need a government you can trust, not one that betrays us" (Boston Globe: April 25, 1991). Attacked from all sides, Chamorro's government was variously accused of either selling out to the Sandinista left or the reactionary right.

Further, Nicaragua was still heavily influenced by the United States, unable independently to implement policies for development and consolidation, much less for
democracy. The ultimate irony of this scenario was the Chamorro regime's desire to remake the educational system and policy making process. Chamorro might have used the arena of education to begin the slow and difficult tasks of real reconciliation with the FSLN, consolidation of UNO, and possibly consolidation of democracy. Instead, education became a mere tool for the regime's own narrow political interests. Under the direct supervision of Cardinal Obando and the Ministry of Education, the reformation -- indeed almost the purging -- of education would allow the state partially to withdraw from some of the accomplishments of and from the level of commitment to education established by the Sandinistas and in so doing appease the United States.

**Politicization Strategy:**

**General Education Policy**

Almost immediately after President Chamorro took office, she made a special direct request to the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) mission in Managua for textbook replacements. She personally became involved in the textbook delivery and distribution process. The gesture was quick, positive, and symbolic of her administration's desire both to support education and to remove Sandinista-oriented and inspired instructional materials from the classrooms. Second, in choosing her second Minister of Education Humberto Belli de Pereria, a former Sandinista turned anti-Sandinista, Chamorro hoped to demonstrate to Nicaraguans a "political conversion." Belli was a convert to the religious sect called the "City of God," a splinter group associated with the Catholic Church. Belli's charge was to rid the education system of the ideology, jargon, pictures, and curriculum of the revolutionary era as quickly as possible.

In 1990, therefore, the Chamorro administration and USAID both sought quickly to accomplish several highly visible tasks. Acquisition of school materials in the basic areas...
of math, reading, and social studies became a top priority. The Ministry of Education set up committees to review all textbooks, many of which were bought from Colombia. Other textbooks were obtained from a Mexican publishing house. These committees, composed of some teachers, were pressured to review the books quickly and make decisions about their value to Nicaraguan students. The haste of this process led to errors and dissatisfaction, especially about instructional materials. Many teachers and parents complained about the inappropriateness of the books. In an effort to purge revolutionary allusions in the old texts, much of the hastily borrowed material was out of date or written for other societies. Such things as wording, metaphors, cultural relevance, and even the fantastic style of the stories (adopted to avoid the pointed references to sociopolitical phenomena in the revolutionary textbooks) troubled educators and community activists. "Tomatoes don't talk" was the trenchant criticism of one teacher (Ayalde, 1995).

Many of the schools, however, were so glad to have any textbooks at all that there was some elation with the shipments. Lilliana Ayalde, the AID desk staff official in Managua, visited many public schools and got myriad reactions from teachers. The Atlantic Coast area received new books as well, but the larger problem of translating those books into the Rama, Sumu, and Miskito dialects was to be a lengthy project. Twelve million dollars from AID purchased the textbooks as part of a long term objective to change more about the curriculum and the education system.

The new government's position on the resurgence of religion in public school life stemmed largely from the choice of Humberto Belli as Minister of Education. President Chamorro totally delegated education policy to him. She, in turn, used the results of his

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17 Lilliana Ayalde was stationed in Managua at the Agency for International Development from 1990 to 1993. She is currently at AID headquarters in Washington, D.C. as the Desk Officer for the Nicaraguan Section. I had a telephone interview with her from her Washington, D.C. office on January 18, 1995.
efforts for her own political portfolio. Her image became one of a "thrilled Grandmother whose children [the nation's] are now going to have appropriate schooling" (Ayalde, 1995).

AID had known of Minister Belli's educational strategies, some problematical, since his 1990 appointment as Vice Minister of Education under Cisneros. For example, some of the texts that were ordered and not properly screened by the committees contained civics sections with religious chapters on the Ten Commandments. AID staff informed Belli that the agency could not support such blatant integration of religious and political materials. Gradually, Belli acquiesced, and the tension between him and the agency subsided. He nevertheless remained highly vocal about moral values and about reviving the nation's sense of morals and values that he claimed were lost in the revolutionary era. Belli frequently advocated that public schools be allowed to include time for religious instruction by clergy. Vocalizing his interest on the subject of education, religion, and morals were central to this work as Education Minister. Lilliana Ayalde, the AID staff official recalled one particular day on which she had a flat tire. Belli offered to give her a ride to get some assistance. He insisted that on route they stop at the local Catholic Church to visit with the priest and have prayer. (Interestingly, Ayalde reported that Belli's views on the role of religion and the state were not fully shared by all members of the Chamorro administration).

Belli's relationship with Cardinal Obando y Bravo was very close in spite of Belli's association with the City of God sect rather than with the traditional Catholic Church. An example of the Cardinal's support for Belli came in the following incident: It is customary in Nicaragua for all ministers to resign their posts at the end of each year. It is an act of deference and they are generally reappointed. Teachers strikes had become widespread in 1991 and 1992 in protest of Belli's policies and teacher's salaries. On two occasions the large teacher's union ANDEN, which had been instrumental in shaping the revolutionary
era's education policies, lobbied President Chamorro not to reappoint Belli. In both instances Cardinal Obando personally requested Chamorro to reappoint him. Obando prevailed.

Belli's second primary objective was to decentralize the education system, albeit in a different way from the revolutionary era. What has been misstated in some circles as a "privatization of schools" was really the state's facilitation of greater local control of schools. This was to be done on a gradual basis. Belli argued that the state should reduce the central administration of education. Rather, the state should set standards but should allow the local schools and the communities to tailor the school programs to their needs and also pay some of their costs. Belli's third goal was more democracy-oriented civic education in secondary schools as well as in the teacher training curriculum. As of late 1994, the American Federation of Teachers and USAID were engaged in a project to promote democratic civic education in Nicaragua that is expected to be completed by 1998.

The Chamorro regime included in its package of proposed reforms of the 1987 Constitution several items: clarification of the state's role in education, specification of the role of local schools and encouragement of private education. Constitutional reforms introduced in the National Assembly in November 1994 offer different language for the articles on education than those in the 1987 Constitution (FBIS, November 10, 1994 p. 10). The proposed new education articles are shorter, and de-emphasize the central role of the state in education policy and implementation. The proposed Article 119, for example, declares that the state is responsible for planning, directing, and organizing the education system, but would delete the passage of the 1987 document that obligates the state to train and educate at all levels and in all fields of specialization.
Proposed Article 121 specifies that both basic and secondary education be mandatory, free, and accessible. Proposed Article 123 requires that the "state recognize and guarantee the complete right to establish private educational centers at all levels, subject to the precepts set forth in the Constitution and the law." The 1987 document, the government complained, did not expressly use the term "guarantee", but rather the phrase "may operate" (FBIS. November 10, 1994 p. 10).

Yet, as late as 1994 the Chamorro regime had not even enforced certain requirements of the 1987 Nicaraguan Constitution. Most particularly, the 1987 Constitution prohibits child labor that could affect normal childhood development and interfere with the obligatory school year. Education is compulsory from ages 7 to 12 and children under 14 are not legally permitted to work. In reality, at least 100,000 children work up to 12 hours a day, many on farms, due to the country's terrible economic conditions (Department of State: 1993).

The Ministry of Education:
An Exercise in Exorcism

An early critique on the Chamorro regime's goals for education appeared in a conference paper by revolutionary era Minister of Education, Carlos Tunneman (1992). Tunneman acknowledged that the Chamorro regime sought to rescue education and promote development, the family, democracy, and peace in a "well rounded" manner. However, he criticized Chamorro's administration for adhering to outside models of education. This, he said, constitutes a pedagogy of dependence. Even though he believed that Chamorro intended to promote development and democracy, it remained unclear to Tunneman what her regime actually meant when it refers to the "current distortions in the education system."
Further, Tunnerman feared that domestic and U.S. pressures might undo the significant progress that was made in education in the 1980's.

Tunnerman argued that the Chamorro regime's first efforts were concentrated heavily upon eliminating any Sandinista ideological slant from school materials. He argued that the regime assigned too much blame to Sandinista emphasis on ideology and too little blame to the Contra War that the country fought for eight years and that undermined the economy and education spending. Tunnerman argued that the Nicaraguan educational materials developed under the Sandinistas might simply have been redrawn to rid them of their ideological slant and would thus have been far superior to the non-Nicaraguan materials adopted in haste in 1990-1992. In short, despite the grave educational problem in the country, Tunnerman faulted the Chamorro regime for worrying too much about political ideology in education and too little about the quality of instructional materials.

According to Tunnerman (1992), had the Sandinistas won the 1990 election they too planned for the Ministry of Education to revise texts to deemphasize revolutionary ideology. He noted the irony that some of the textbooks that Chamorro had imported from Puerto Rico, with Puerto Rican expressions, are not understandable either to teachers or students—an inexplicable choice regardless of the new government's policy goals. Further, Tunnerman suggested that while the passing of the Career Teacher Law was good in principle, the National Assembly may have erred by not clarifying that partisanship should not be introduced into the training academies (p. 28).

Primary school textbooks provide another example of the problem of adopting outside models. Texts printed in Colombia were employed in the first phase of weeding out leftist ideology in favor of what were described as traditional civic values. Several of the
texts replaced revolutionary era guerrillas with cartoon rabbits. A spokesman for the Chamorro regime noted that

Our urgent task is taking out the language of violence, hate, and civil war that is in the books. The Sandinista educational system was directed at simply conquering the youth with an ideology. This was their basic plan and perhaps they achieved it in part. (Cisneros, 1990: p. 2)

Juan Arrien (1990) was the Director of Educational Planning for 10 years in the revolutionary era of the 1980's. He has argued that the Chamorro regime in its effort to erase the Sandinista legacy, may have set back gains made in accessibility to education.

I don't deny that the revolution's education project might have had an ideological connotation. Those are errors that one has to accept among the great benefits created for education in this country by the revolution. We'll see if in the name of overcoming one ideology, they don't put in another. (Arrien, 1990: p. 2)

The textbook issue in particular has been a source of contention during the Chamorro era. Of the new primary school language texts, for example, teachers, organizations, and parents complained that the book was pitched to the middle class and was sexist and racist. It depicted men and women in very traditional gender roles. Even in the teaching profession of which women constitute 80 percent of the work force, men were used for the illustrations in the text. The book, adopted for the Atlantic Coast area as well, was doubly offensive with the aforementioned biases plus using stereotypical portraits of Indians. It played down the black movement in that region out of concern for political stability (Arnove, 1993: pp. 83-85).

The clear desire of the regime to inculcate particular religious values through textbooks brought criticisms from Catholics, mainstream Protestants, and Evangelicals. The argument concerned whose religious values should prevail. Students in the Civics and
Morality classes consisted of a mixture of all three religious sectors. Each lobbied for its own viewpoint of the Ten Commandments and the meaning of morals to be included in the public school curriculum (Arnone, 1993: pp. 90-92).

Another concern of Arrien was possible elitism in education. The Sandinistas had opened the schools to the poor and affirmed that they would fight any attempts to make education elitist again.

The FSLN also sounded an alarm about the growing influence of the Catholic Church in public school classrooms after 1990. Arrien (1990) noted that Sofonias Cisneros, Chamorro's first Minister of Education, had served as president of the Christian Parents Association during the years the Sandinistas were in power. The Sandinistas expressed particular concerns that a Protestant had been placed in charge of revamping school curricula. Under the Nicaraguan Constitution, Nicaragua was a secular state. However, even though Humberto Belli belonged to the City of God sect, Education Minister Cisneros denied that the church would have a role in reshaping the government's education policies. "The church, as such, has no influence in education in Nicaragua" (Jacobsen: 1990). Cisneros noted further that the Chamorro regime intended to improve the quality of education by bringing in more qualified teachers and administrators, describing some Sandinista teachers as unqualified and "just members of mass organizations."

Early efforts by the Chamorro regime to change school administrators, however, led to student strikes and school takeovers in several towns including Managua. Arrien (1990) predicted that if the new regime were to move to eliminate all vestiges of the Sandinista program, there could be further protests from pro-Sandinista students and teachers.

An example of the new policies being put into effect is Managua's Rigoberto López Pérez School -- named after the poet who in 1956 had assassinated Anastasio Somoza
Garcia, the founder of that dynasty. There teachers said that the Sandinista anthem was no longer sung before classes. Further, party propaganda was removed from all the walls. Lily Torres, a Spanish teacher and one of the few non-Sandinistas on the staff, observed that while depoliticizing classrooms would improve learning, she would continue to remind students of the revolution. "A revolution can not be erased just like that. It had its good things and there must be an evaluation of those good things" (Jacobsen, 1990).

Napoleon Chow wrote in La Prensa in 1992 that the Sandinista Front was still very entrenched in the Ministry of Education. Thus the Ministry, the largest employer in Nicaragua, had strategic importance as one institution in which Sandinistas still could provide some patronage positions to political activists. It also provided a platform from which to harass Education Minister Belli, whom the FSLN had disliked from the beginning. Interestingly, Belli skillfully deflected some of this criticism. To counter Sandinista attacks, for example, he appointed two Sandinistas, Dr. Carlos Tunnerman, Education Minister from 1980-1984, and Commander Dora Maria Téllez of the Army to the National Education Council. However, in a demonstration of strength and independence Belli "removed the Sandinista activists who went beyond their trade union agreements to provoke confrontations for the sole purpose of engaging in political terrorism and educational boycotts" (FBIS. November 20, 1992, p. 25).

All these criticisms and problems notwithstanding, the Ministry of Education claimed numerous achievements in public education from 1990 through 1993. Among those cited by Aurora Gurdia, Director General of Education are: (1) the distribution of 9,622,596 textbooks at a cost of 51,250,188 córdobas, and abolishing the practice of making only one primary textbook available for certain grade levels; (2) the creation of new more autonomous administrative structures in three cities to operate 180 school centers and employ 1,176
people through an MED budget transfer of 5,493,349 córdobas; (3) an agreement for
scholastic autonomy in 20 special school centers employing 953 people through an MED
budget transfer of 3,375,203 córdobas; (4) the publication of new education regulations; (5)
the creation of a National Council of Education; (6) developing and redeeming [exact words
in report from Aurora Gurdia, a general director at the MED] the nation's culture and values
through courses in composition, music, mathematics, poetry, rhetoric, folklore, and painting;
(7) the rehabilitation of 310 scholastic centers and the distribution of 203 classrooms
outfitted with 214,442 desks through an arrangement between the local municipalities and
a local social organization; (8) systematizing, modernizing, and accurately collecting
scholastic statistics at the local level; (9) the integration of information on drug use
prevention, sexual education, morals and civic responsibility, philosophy, economics,
nutrition, and sociology into the curriculum; (10) the qualifying of 22,028 teachers and
technicians who will work at these new centers, (11) strengthening the bilingual intercultural
program for 11,663 children; and last but not least, (12) an increase between 1990 and 1992
in numbers of children that are promoted from first grade to the fourth grade level and a
decrease in the number of primary students that have to repeat grades (Gurdia, Ministry of
Education, 1994).

Tightening the Scope of Policy:

Contributors and Beneficiaries

Michael Friedman (1992) suggests that there is considerable debate within the
Chamorro regime over goals, the groups involved in education policy making, and the
beneficiaries of public education. The Education Ministry clearly articulated its opposition
to politics and ideology in the schools, but educators like Doreyda Obando, a sixth grade
instructor at a public school, reveal the skepticism:
They can't say that now (1991) education is not politicized, because clearly every education system responds to the interests of the government in power, so I think they should distinguish between the politics of the previous government (Ortega) and the politics of the new government (Chamorro). The revolution was a reality and what we taught the children was based on reality. (quoted in Friedman, 1992: p. 21)

Among criticisms of the implementation of these new policies by the new government were several serious items: Critics accused the Ministry of Education of authorizing the burning of books in schools and public libraries, and of harassing and firing teachers. Student leaders and student protestors were expelled or suspended from school. Allegedly, one thousand teachers were let go or transferred to remote spots -- an ironic sort of policy given the pattern of civic unrest and political activities associated with the remote areas in Nicaragua. Many pro FSLN teachers worried about retaining their jobs. The superintendents in various areas made changes and transfers routinely, a product of anti-Sandinista "revanchismo" -- a practice of revenge. "They're not even allowing teachers to hang pictures of the heroes and martyrs, even Sandino! Sandino is the George Washington of Nicaragua, the anti-imperialist of the 1930's, murdered because he created a revolutionary movement" (Guellette, 1991, p. 8).

As for curriculum, Friedman (1992) notes Sandinista claims that education reforms by Chamorro would favor elites over non-elites. The deletion of science and production programs and the addition of emphasis on computer programming do not fit the needs of a developing country. How many students, they ask, will have access to computers? The answer is: only the wealthy ones (p. 22). In the place of science programs, the regime added civic morality (citizenship) and instruction in the philosophy of composition written by instructors at the National Theological Seminary. Such changes in curriculum, according to the new regime's critics, favor both the elite and the Church.
The Freirean method, promoted by the Sandinistas and dominating textbooks of the period, was replaced with methods and materials more in tune with new educational goals. Freirean educational techniques were designed to promote critical consciousness, awareness of class position, sociopolitical organization, and the revolutionary transformation of society. Not surprisingly, therefore, new textbooks were rapidly substituted for the revolutionary era texts of Freirian orientation, using U.S. AID funding. To receive the AID money, however, the Nicaraguan government had to agree that the 12 million dollars worth of books would either come from other Latin American countries or from "supervised writing" (pp. 23-24). As an outcome of these self-imposed ideological biases and external funding constraints, books had to be obtained hurriedly and cheaply. The books purchased from Colombia and Honduras for this program were obsolete, having been dropped previously from those nations' schools in the 1970s.

Another example of ideological changes in curriculum came in another textbook decision. Mario Quintana, Secretary General of the public teacher's union ANDEN, noted that the philosophical and political direction of elementary schools was clear from the textbook chosen for the Morality and Civics classes. The book, entitled *Let's Learn to Get Along*, was written by members of the Theresian School, who "quote extensively from the Bible and inculcate the conservative agenda regarding sexuality, abortion, gender roles, marriage, and respect for the figure of a punitive God" (p. 20). Darwin Juárez, a former member of the National Education Council, argued that by incorporating "the Catholic Church's values in the educational system, the MED violated the secular character of education, guaranteed by the Constitution, as well as the religious freedom of other social sectors" (p. 21).
ANDEN (the FSLN oriented teacher's union) has also worried about changes in who is being taught. The organization argued that a "beneficiary shift" de-emphasizes rural and poor areas. This policy change, ANDEN claimed, included attempts at privatization, forced privatization (not hiring enough teachers so that the school will close), and budget cuts. ANDEN's involvement in education policy making, extensive during the revolutionary years, was reduced sharply, yet ANDEN clearly wants back into the policy process (pp. 24-25).

ANDEN's efforts to be included in education policy making in the Chamorro government, however, were rebuffed by the Ministry of Education. On April 1991 8,000 teachers went on strike, protesting throughout the country against the Ministry's failure to implement appropriately the Teacher Career Law. Moreover, primary school teachers were earning the equivalent of $44 a month. ANDEN's Mario Quintana said that teachers wanted an 80 percent raise, a new wage scale, job stability, retirement benefits, training, and professionalization for teachers (British Broadcasting Corp. April 24, 1991).

The government's exclusionary policy against ANDEN thus forced the union to take job actions in order to protect the teaching profession rather than to focus on the mission of education. The organization has thus fought less for the restoration of gains made in education under the Sandinistas than for making their livelihood secure. By early May, the 1991 the teacher's strike grew to include 18,000 teachers who struck for fifty days over paychecks and salary adjustments. Parents, students, and other unions supported the strike for the most part.

By May 23, 1991, the government was ready to negotiate with teachers, as students occupied the Presidential Palace. By May 24, students and teachers continued to occupy the offices of the Ministry of Education. The MED threatened force and the teachers were dislodged. At a May 27 news conference, Education Minister Belli "told reporters in
Managua that the 42-day national teachers' strike had ended and that 15,000 teachers would return to their classrooms (Latin American Institute, *Central American Update*: May 29, 1991). The Nicaraguan state school teachers accepted a 25 percent wage increase and a new contract. Though teachers did not win their 80 percent increase, Qunitana said that "no one was totally satisfied with the accord, but we have moved forward" (*Reuters Reports*, May 27, 1991).

Labor difficulties in the education sector were not over, however. In a September 14, 1991 letter to President Chamorro, ANDEN members and the Health Workers Federation (FETSALUD) and the National Employees Union (UNE) demanded that the government authorize a 100 percent wage hike. Nicaraguan teachers were earning an average of 438 córdobas a month ($87.60). The Basic Food Basket of 53 items, used to calculate cost of living, cost 900 córdobas ($180) per month (Latin American Institute, *Central American Update*: September 25, 1991).

The *Boston Globe* reported that the main cause of Chamorro's troubles with teachers and other public sector workers was the weak economy. After a year in power, peace was the only point on Mrs. Chamorro's government's scorecard. By many indicators the country appeared to have stood still, and in others to have regressed. Economic production had fallen 5 percent, inflation shot up to 13,000 percent and almost 50 percent of the people had no steady employment. To place Nicaragua's economic plight in context, it is helpful to look at all of Latin America. According to the *Financial Times*' Stephen Fidler, the 1980's was an economic debacle for most of Latin America. The number of people in poverty in the region grew from 27 percent in 1980 to 32 percent in 1989. Nicaragua's situation was among the worst in the region, its levels of production having fallen more than any other country's
(Fidler, 1993: p. 8). By the early 1990's, however, the rest of Latin America was recovering economically, but Nicaragua was not.

On October 10, 1991, teachers demonstrated again in Managua. ANDEN called for new contracts with benefits as well as participation in formulating the 1992 national budget. When demonstration leaders were prevented from submitting their petitions to Presidential Minister Antonio Lacayo, fighting broke out and anti-riot police allegedly beat at least two protestors (Latin American Institute, *Central American Update*: October 16, 1991). Over the course of the next two months, Mario Quintana tried to hold together those in ANDEN who fought only for their economic security and those who remained committed to a deeper struggle to defend educational progress begun in the revolutionary years. He urged ANDEN members and Sandinistas at large not to shy away from all the problems of the Nicaraguan people. Quintana argued that even in times of economic distress, ANDEN and Nicaraguans should not forego making socio-economic demands. "We can not deny the struggles facing the majority of the Nicaraguan people. Social exclusion is still occurring with new illiterates. We Nicaraguan people, as teachers, parents, and students must organize better to continue an active struggle to bring about an improved distribution of wealth and most of all, to ensure the economic democratization process" (FBIS. December 8, 1992: p. 27).

Other clashes occurred in the closing months of 1992 and the first few months of 1993. The Ministry of Education fired 50 teachers for engaging in brief, but illegal strikes. The Nicaraguan Constitution recognizes the right to strike and the Labor Code prohibits retribution against strikers only in what are considered legal strikes. Further disagreements between the MED and ANDEN led the Ministry in mid 1993 not to recognize the ANDEN leadership or to negotiate a new collective bargaining arrangement with them (U.S. Department of State Dispatch, 1993).
In early 1994, teachers again went on strike. ANDEN had threatened that primary and secondary school teachers would stop work if the MED did not resolve certain disputes concerning teachers and other employees whose jobs were education related or those had lost their jobs. Teachers wanted salary changes, life insurance, housing, and job security. These demands came in tandem with those of other labor unions, the national employees union (UNE), and the coffee growers. Strikes, however, did not materialize for all of these groups (Xinhua News Agency, February 7, 1994).

Politicization Strategy:

Education Finance Policy

Between 1990 and 1992, the Nicaraguan currency, the córdoba, was devalued several times, a continuing legacy of economic problems arising from the Contra war, the U.S. embargo, and revolutionary economic policies. The inflation rate by March, 1991 was 260 percent. The government took draconian steps that did, however, manage to stabilize prices between April and December. By 1992, hyperinflation was under control but inflation was still a contributor to financial woes. In 1990 imports rose 2.3 percent, and 20.9 percent in 1991. In 1990 exports rose 15.1 percent, but then declined by 13.7 percent in 1991. (Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1993: pp. 291-296). Thus, Nicaragua continued to export far too little, and to import far too much for its economic health and stability.

On the socio-economic front, adult literacy fell to 66 percent. El Nicaragüense reported that 65 percent of Nicaraguans did not have access to clean drinking water; 80 percent were not hooked up to the sewer system; 25 percent of school age children did not attend school; 70 percent of the population did not have toilets; 86 percent of the rural population and 55 percent of the urban population could not meet their basic needs. Per
capita income by the end of 1992 was $340, as public spending accounted for 45 percent of the gross domestic product, and schools and hospitals were in short supply (FBIS. December 24, 1992: p. 11). In 1991, Nicaragua ranked 85th in GDP per capita—among the world's poorest nations—and by 1992 it had, according to economist Oscar René Vargas, dropped 14 places further to be among the "most wretched, comparable only to some African nations." The reason for that drop was the dramatic further economic deterioration that elevated the overall unemployment rate to 53 percent by the end of 1992 (FBIS. November 18, 1992 p. 14).

This was the context in which education would have to be financed. In equally devastating economic situations during the revolutionary era, the state had shouldered the responsibility of education. The Chamorro regime, however, was more interested in reducing the role of the state and in encouraging both the creation of private schools and the privatization of some public schools as alternative sources of education in order to reduce public spending. Paradoxically, however, Chamorro simultaneously attempted to control private schools more than the Sandinistas had. By 1992 she had cut subsidies to private education and limited what private subsidized schools could charge in user fees (Arnove, 1993: p. 115). As Tables 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6 show there was a difference between primary and secondary schools in this effort.

Further, in September of 1992, Chamorro announced a 15 percent general value tax on private primary and secondary schools in presidential decree 52-92. Private schools reacted swiftly. A delegation consisting of members of the National Federation of Catholic Teachers, principals of private schools, and Deputy Education Minister Hortensia Rivas, among others, met with the government. Within 30 days, Finance Minister Emilio Pereira announced the rescission of the tax. The administration's change of position was attributed
to the "realization" that private schools save the government money, and are indeed a complement to the state (FBIS. October 20, 1992: p. 13).

It is difficult to assess the specific financial impact that renewed availability of U.S. AID monies had upon Nicaraguan education between 1991 and 1993. In 1991, President Bush reactivated AID funding after the long hiatus of the Reagan years. A sixty million dollar project entitled Basic Education was launched for fiscal years 1992-1988; it targets primary education for MED institutional strengthening, teacher training, and curriculum development.

The project was intended to enhance the MED's ability to upgrade its planning capability, study decentralization, computerize management information, and improve financial procurement. Another element was the writing of a Basic Education Guide with practical instructions on child-centered studies, as a foundation for teacher training. Over 20,000 copies have been distributed; hopes are that 2,800 MED decision makers, normal school professors, practice teachers, methodologists, supervisors, parents, and community leaders will be trained by using the Guide. Developing master teachers, in-service training for some 12,000 accredited and non-accredited teachers, and establishing demonstration schools and 12 laboratory schools were also part of the package. Curriculum development projects included developing better textbooks, grade-level competency standards, and new instructional material in mathematics, language arts, and civics. The assistance package also funded student evaluation measures and such tangible supplies as chalk, blackboards, pencils, maps, and paper (AID Library. Project no. 5240329).

A second project, operational also for 1992-1998 and costing $18 million, included an education component. Its overall thrust, however, was to strengthen democratic institutions in Nicaragua. Its scope encompassed strengthening the legislative, judicial,
media, and labor union functions, and also addressed human rights. The education portion, the money for which is not specified, was to be allocated to the promotion of democratic values by both formal means and by grassroots civic education.

On the formal side the project aimed to establish a system of democratic civic education in primary and secondary schools with a kindergarten through twelfth grade curriculum. "Master" teachers would develop classroom activities for teaching democracy and training one "education for democracy" teacher in every Nicaraguan school. Grassroots civic education included broadcast and print media campaigns, public fora and town meetings, workshops, and support for grassroots civic organizations (AID Library. Project no. 5240316).

In the spring of 1992, the Nicaraguan Council of Evangelical Churches (CEPAD) issued a report which included the following list of problems in public education: (1) The cost of education was driving children away from school. (2) One in five children of primary age did not enter school in 1991. (3) One half of the children who dropped out of school did not re-enter. (4) Half of the children who did attend, dropped out within three years. And (5) the literacy rate of the aggregate population was declining. Many of these results stemmed directly from the escalating cost of clothes, school supplies, and textbook rental. The rental of texts was made necessary by the regime's mandatory replacement of the old books that contained inappropriate political material (Wilde, 1992. p. 294). At the beginning of the 1992 school year, Margaret Wilde (1992) reported, public high school students were required to "pay $2.00 per month in tuition, and primary school students were requested to pay a 'voluntary' $1.00 monthly fee. Parents worried that the fees would be raised once the precedent was established. Although these amounts seem tiny to more prosperous North Americans, they constituted a burden for a Nicaraguan family with several school age
children (p. 294). The per capita income in Nicaragua in 1992 was the equivalent of $340 (FBIS. December 24, 1992: p. 11). Thus for a family with two children in high school and two in grade school, public school tuition alone would have cost roughly $60 per year -- a large portion of a poor family's earnings.

Wilde (1992) observes that one former Sandinista supporter who had voted for Chamorro in 1990 expressed frustration about U.S. foreign assistance in education in these terms. The U.S. seemed to this observer to lose interest in Nicaragua after the 1990 elections were over. "We agreed to let the U.S. call the tune, but they say, 'You go ahead, you're on your own now.' How could they be so concerned about our welfare one day and so utterly detached the next?" (p. 294). The AID effort, as previously noted, has not been wholly evaluated at the writing of this paper.

**Education Finance Policy:**

**Shifting the Emphasis in Education**

Three years is a short span within which to detect any particular pattern or tendency, but the economic and school data in Tables 6.1 through 6.6 nonetheless reveal some trends. Despite dramatic fluctuations in nominal córdobas spent on education due to currency fluctuations and inflation, the percentage of GDP devoted to education between 1990 and 1993 ranged only between 3.1 and 3.3 percent (Table 6.1, column 9) for no net change for the period. Although the percentage of all government expenditures dedicated to education rose from 9.6 percent to 12.7 percent for the 1990-1993 period (Table 6.1, column 8) -- an increase of 32 percent -- applying a correction for population growth (column 9) reveals a net increase in education spending per capita of only 3.6 percent for the four year period. Violeta Chamorro's government, then, continued to spend on education at a fairly constant rate (only a modest increase) when measured against overall economic activity.
If one assumes that the larger portion of all spending on education was on primary education, primary teachers and classrooms (for instance, in 1991 79 percent of all Nicaraguan students were in primary school -- Table 6.2 columns 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9) then those efforts were positive (Table 6.3) in the 1990-1993 period, revealing substantial increases. There also appears to have been a substantial effort to shore up secondary instruction, based upon growing 1990-1993 enrollment figures (Table 6.2, columns 5, 8). However, the results from this effort as reflected in Table 6.3's age-by-enrollment percentage profile do not indicate much progress on the secondary level. Table 6.3 clearly shows that, for children in the population, primary school enrollment ranged from 74 to 91 percent among children aged 7-12. In sharp contrast, however, for ages 13-17, there was a continuous and significant drop in enrollment for each additional year in age -- from 78 percent for 13 year olds to only 16 percent for 17 year olds.

Table 6.2 further reveals that between 1990 and 1993 the Chamorro government added many new primary teachers (almost 17 percent) and secondary teachers (nearly 72 percent). This gain in the number of teachers was sufficiently rapid to lower the student teacher ratio from 34 students per teacher to 32 student per teacher.

Further comparisons of urban and rural, primary and secondary, and public versus private education are made possible by Tables 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6. There one notes that the most dynamic educational sector under the Chamorro government was that of purely private education, followed by private schools with public subsidies. Several trends stand out: (1) From the data in Table 6.4 one notes, for instance, that the number of public primary schools grew only 7.5 percent (urban) and 9.3 percent (rural) from 1990 to 1993, while the number of state-subsidized primary private schools grew at several times those rates in both
<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1736.0</td>
<td>812,400</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>456.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1764.5*</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>179.5</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1793.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>239.1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>473.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1793.0</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>264.5</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>473.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth 1990-1993</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimate based on averaging 1990 and 1992 figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>General Pop. (in millions)</th>
<th>Total Primary &amp; Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Primary Enrollment</th>
<th>Secondary Enrollment</th>
<th>Total Teachers Primary &amp; Secondary</th>
<th>Primary Teachers</th>
<th>Secondary Teachers</th>
<th>Primary Classrooms (urban)</th>
<th>Primary Classrooms (rural)</th>
<th>Ratio of all Students to all Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>784,841</td>
<td>632,882</td>
<td>151,959</td>
<td>22,970</td>
<td>19,022</td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>8,534</td>
<td>8,647</td>
<td>34:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>850,970</td>
<td>674,045</td>
<td>176,865</td>
<td>24,807</td>
<td>20,671</td>
<td>4,136</td>
<td>14,567</td>
<td>9,511</td>
<td>34:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>882,196</td>
<td>703,854</td>
<td>178,342</td>
<td>26,251</td>
<td>21,242</td>
<td>5,009</td>
<td>14,194</td>
<td>9,582</td>
<td>34:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>924,198</td>
<td>737,476</td>
<td>186,722</td>
<td>29,010</td>
<td>22,223</td>
<td>6,787</td>
<td>17,854</td>
<td>10,160</td>
<td>32:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>109.2%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>-8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 6.3
AGE-SPECIFIC ENROLLMENT
NICARAGUA: 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages*</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>127,950</td>
<td>94,960</td>
<td>74.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>124,170</td>
<td>99,700</td>
<td>80.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>120,407</td>
<td>95,999</td>
<td>79.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>116,670</td>
<td>101,936</td>
<td>87.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>112,968</td>
<td>94,541</td>
<td>83.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>109,323</td>
<td>99,533</td>
<td>91.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>105,751</td>
<td>78,186</td>
<td>78.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>102,256</td>
<td>58,815</td>
<td>57.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>98,817</td>
<td>49,138</td>
<td>49.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>95,428</td>
<td>20,949</td>
<td>21.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>92,683</td>
<td>14,970</td>
<td>16.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ages 7-12 in primary school, ages 13-17 in secondary school

Urban and rural areas. However, the greatest growth rates occurred for urban and rural primary schools -- 180 percent and 96 percent, respectively. The number of public secondary schools actually declined over the 1990-1993 period, however, both urban (-22 percent) and rural (-16 percent).

(2) Public primary enrollments (Table 6.5) rose significantly in urban areas (about 10 percent) and even more in rural areas (21 percent). Partially state-subsidized rural private schools' enrollments jumped sharply (131 percent), but rural high school enrollments fell by 66 percent. Fully private primary schools (both urban and rural) and urban private secondary schools also saw large enrollment increases. In contrast, rural private school enrollments dropped 58 percent from 1991 to 1993.
TABLE 6.4
NUMBER OF SCHOOL CENTERS - URBAN - RURAL
BY SCHOOL TYPE
NICARAGUA: 1990 - 1993

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Run Schools</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>3,278</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>3,469</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>3,517</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>3,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(by State Subsidies)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>152</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Private Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>(w/no State Subsidies)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The overall pattern emerging from Tables 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6 is that private and state-subsidized schools did better (grew more in number, enrollments, and teachers) under the Chamorro regime than did public schools. Much of the educational private sector growth was in rural primary schools and urban high schools. Rural secondary enrollments, in sharp contrast, diminished in all three types of schools (public, public-subsidized private, and private), but rural primary school enrollments increased in all three types. In summary, the most favored and most successful segments of the educational system under Chamorro were urban private schools at all levels. The most disfavored and least successful segments were rural secondary schools, which lost public school centers and experienced sharp enrollment declines over four years in all three types of schools.
### Table 6.5

**Number of School Centers - Urban - Rural Teachers by School Type**

**Nicaragua: 1990 - 1993**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Run Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>7,024</td>
<td>7,863</td>
<td>7,285</td>
<td>8,619</td>
<td>7,587</td>
<td>8,651</td>
<td>7,455</td>
<td>8,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2,729</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>366</td>
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<td>Primary</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>122</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>9</td>
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### Table 6.6

**Number of School Centers - Urban - Rural Enrollment by School Type**

**Nicaragua: 1990 - 1993**

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>281,187</td>
<td>251,595</td>
<td>295,847</td>
<td>271,586</td>
<td>308,325</td>
<td>285,285</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>42,179</td>
<td>5,570</td>
<td>47,091</td>
<td>39,129</td>
<td>39,129</td>
<td>4,002</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11,493</td>
<td>13,920</td>
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<td>452</td>
<td>17,376</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(w/no State Subsidies)</td>
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<td>41,655</td>
<td>11,479</td>
<td>45,078</td>
<td>6,015</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
<td>14,099</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>14,412</td>
<td>27,796</td>
<td>27,796</td>
<td>1,173</td>
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Politicization of Education:

Analyzing Chamorro's Policies

The hypothesis in chapter three suggested that the center-right regime of Violeta Chamorro would politicize education by utilizing a mixture of expansive and restrictive education policies. We have found that the regime renounced the nearly monopolistic role of the state as the provider of education of the revolutionary period and encouraged private sector growth in education. In doing so Chamorro sought to change the isomorphism between education politics and regime politics by reducing ideology as a principal factor driving education policies and by reducing state influence over education. The power of religious interests to insert religion into education policy making however, was present.

I had expected, however, that the state would retain leadership in funding education even while the regime encouraged private competition to provide the same services. So far, the goal has not yet been met:

> Despite avowed goals of [Chamorro's] MED to favor the poorest groups in society, the introduction of user fees has hindered their access to schooling. Similarly its goal of reforming the teaching-learning process is countered by requiring a minimum of forty-five students per classroom. Increased polarization has resulted from these policies, as the Nicaraguan educational system has not merely reflected the dimensions of the society in various ways, it has intensified it. (Arnove, 1993: p. 128)

What has occurred between 1990 and 1993 has reflected considerable ambiguity and confusion. In its zeal to rid the public education system of all ideological remnants of the revolutionary era, the Chamorro regime did several things: First, Chamorro wasted scarce resources and money by destroying materials and textbooks that could have merely been updated historically or supplemented. Moreover, while the data on spending does not denote severe declines, it does not necessarily indicate that the administration kept up with the need.
Further, any nominal efforts by teachers to retain in the curriculum any reference to the legacy of the revolutionary era, even in a factual rendition of events, was prohibited. Deliberate efforts were made to decrease the strength of ANDEN, the largest teacher's union and affiliated with the Sandinistas. Third, a strong right-wing element in the government, less open to compromise within its own ranks as well as with the FSLN, began to affect policy. Taken together, these three phenomena suggest that the meaning of the revolution and the people's struggle to rid itself of the dictatorial Somoza dynasty remained unsettled in Nicaragua—among the people, within the government, and in the education policy making process. Indeed, this confusion was quite apparent in the process and substance of education policy. The extremely cooperative relationship between Cardinal Obando y Bravo and President Chamorro signalled the intent to bring the Church and Christian values into the school system, at least in part to counter any lingering revolutionary values. Another area of conflicting policies involved the degree and nature of centralized versus local control. President Chamorro's selection of Humberto Belli as her second Minister of Education and the resulting drive to give local communities more control over schools suggests a desire to make education politics at least partly separate from state politics. One could argue however, that the question of religion in school was a ruse to keep the regime's hand in education politics.

Ridding the school system of the ideological legacy of the revolution did not mean eliminating ideology altogether. This regime pushed "democratic" values (that is, non-revolutionary) indoctrination in the curriculum. Renewed U.S. financial assistance aimed specifically to promote such anti-revolutionary values in the curriculum. One could contend that by such ideological shifts in education policy and curriculum the Chamorro regime
sought to enhance its own legitimacy by visibly delegitimizing the education achievements of the revolutionary era.

It is too soon to determine whether in these efforts to redirect the course of public education in Nicaragua, Violeta Chamorro's government has risked too much. The regime did not seek to build upon the gains achieved in the revolutionary era. A huge shift toward privately run schools marked the new regime's approach. Because the state has chosen to diminish its central role in education and simultaneously expects the private sector to pick up the slack, there have been and will continue to be consequences. The reason is simple. Educational standards and attainment in Nicaragua remain far below appropriate levels. Quickly changing who controls education may create confusion as to whom the state is delegating this responsibility. The proposed constitutional reforms that include new language on the value and importance of education may allow an ongoing means of regime manipulation, not unlike the constitutions in the Somoza era or the Sandinista era.
CHAPTER VII

A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF NICARAGUAN EDUCATION POLICY

This paper argues that there is a relationship between regime type and public education policy. I hypothesized that the ideology of a regime would shape both general education policy and education finance. This chapter summarizes and compares findings of the three regimes and their education policies. It speculates about whether education policy affects the legitimacy of these regimes and assesses the tie between education and political development in Nicaragua.

In *Education as Contested Terrain: Nicaragua, 1979-1993*, Robert Arno (1994) suggests that all contemporary societies struggle with the politics of education. This is especially true of developing countries such as those of Latin America. This likelihood that education politics will spark conflict stems from education's power to transform social and political culture. "What makes the Nicaraguan case special is the dramatic nature of the shifts--in the political and educational policy arenas--that have occurred within a relatively brief period" (p. 201).

An ongoing difficulty for countries making political and economic development adjustments has been to find a satisfactory, that is to say complete, developmental model. Such a model must define the most appropriate roles for the market and for the state in the provision of basic social services. Ideally for a regime, the development model should also serve the need to build "political consensus and national accord...a priority for societies undergoing difficult transitions in their political and economic systems" (Arno, 1994: p. 202). In Nicaragua, schools socialize children and youth towards national consensus values. Arno suggests that the Nicaraguan education system has been perceived by successive
regimes as a tool sufficiently malleable to use in pursuit of both political and economic ends (p. 202). Arnove's research on Nicaragua between 1979 and 1993, I believe, corroborates my findings for that period and provides confirmation of the links of regime type to education policy. He offers ample evidence of how ideology politicizes education.

My findings so far suggest that, for Nicaragua from 1967 through 1993, the three regimes of Somoza, the Sandinistas, and Chamorro each took markedly different approaches to education. They differed in their ideologies, in the nature of their education policies, and in the outcomes of these policies. In this chapter I examine comparatively the regimes, their policies, and their effects.

Nicaraguan Education Policies in Comparative Perspective

Regime type clearly affected education policy in each of the regimes, and regime change clearly altered the course of policy. The right wing regime of Anastasio Somoza Debayle (1967-1979) made education policy isomorphic to regime politics by keeping close personal control over education in order to restrict both access to and benefits from public education. The perception of the regime (in the person of Somoza), and by default of the state, was to some extent that children and youth were potential enemies of the regime. As such their ability and capability to participate in the society had to be limited by limiting their education (Arnove: p. 21). Ironically, this deliberate neglect of education produced some of the anger of the citizens who eventually participated in the revolt against Somoza. The data presented below confirm in comparative context Somoza's manipulation of education for narrowly defined regime interests and with little regard for public utility.

The left wing revolutionary era (1979-1990), including both the National Government of Reconstruction and the Ortega administration, made education policy somewhat less isomorphic to regime goals -- that is, rather more open to influence of forces
outside the regime and to debate and discussion within the regime. Disputes and arguments over education policy, for example, were common between the ruling FSLN and the government's own Ministry of Education. The task of undoing 43 years of the neglectful Somoza dynasty began with a massive literacy campaign that did dramatically improve the literacy rate from 45 percent in 1978 to 88 percent by 1983. It is, I believe, that effort that led the Sandinistas to less isomorphic education policies. It would of course be incorrect to conclude that the Sandinista philosophy was not the centerpiece of educational development. Clearly, the record shows that the curriculum, the textbooks, and the methodologies used by the teachers (most of whom were affiliated with the Sandinista oriented ANDEN teachers' union) contained strong ideological messages.

Compared to the Somoza era, however, the Sandinistas made education more open for mass consumption, and let both the education bureaucracy and community and mass pressures influence policy. Amove (1994) explains that the revolution opened opportunities for tens of thousands of dispossessed individuals. Those who "entered either public schooling or the parallel system of non-formal and popular education were equipped and empowered to run cooperatives, receive credit, and participate in community and public life unimaginable before the revolution" (p. 49). During the revolutionary era, complete pedagogy shifted strongly toward collective, participatory, inquiry-directed, and work-oriented approaches. Schools became directly involved in the concerns of their communities and gave credit for service related activities (p.21).

The centrist regime of Violeta Chamorro in 1990 initially sought to make education policy non-isomorphic to regime politics. Her administration wanted the state to relax certain restrictive practices of the Sandinista-run education system to promote decentralization and privatization, and to include religious instruction in the curriculum. The Chamorro regime
worked hard to purge socialist/leftist philosophies from the education process. "If the FSLN [under Ortega] had promoted an interventionist state and the logic of the majority, the incoming [Chamorro] government championed what might be called a greatly diminished 'facilitative' state and the logic of the market place...yet as previously noted, in the education system, socialist minded values were to be replaced by values of Christian inspiration" (Arnove, 1994: p. 57).

The evidence I have found also reveals that the politicization strategies used by the three Nicaraguan regimes (with their subsequent outputs and outcomes) clearly differed from one another. My hypotheses about their education strategies have been generally confirmed by the evidence presented in the previous chapters. They are further corroborated by the spending data analyzed in this chapter.

General education and finance policies under Somoza exhibited more restrictive characteristics, those in the revolutionary era exhibited more expansive characteristics, and those under Chamorro exhibited a mix of both expansive and restrictive characteristics. Caveats concerning the evidence, however, are necessary and important to mention. Data on Nicaraguan education have been subject to bias and inaccuracies for all 26 years examined. Education record keeping was not uniform or consistent across the three regimes. Bureaucratic and presidential decisions to exclude or embellish data have been observed, and the interpretation of the school-related data by each succeeding regime is often subjective. As a consequence of these problems, I have had to evaluate and interpret the available data with care. Another problem with the evidence available on Nicaraguan education is that the available data tell us very little about the marginalized student and the dropout -- that is, about those not benefitting from any policy. Despite those data problems, evidence is quite
sufficient to show that change in regimes across these 26 years did produce marked changes in policy.

My findings also offer another perspective on certain theories about change in Latin American regimes. I noted in chapter two that observers of the region's politics assume that, despite regime change, governments tend merely to make minor adjustments to certain sets of policies favored by the dominant elites. That is, despite regime change, little really ever changes in the policy arena. My findings, especially for the period 1979-1994, indicate that policies did indeed shift in Nicaragua, and that there occurred consequent changes in education outputs.

The rightist regime of Somoza restricted input into education policy and limited access to schooling to the populace as a whole while biasing service delivery to urban areas. Population growth was steady and fairly rapid under Somoza, as was GDP, which actually rose faster than the population (Figure 7.1) during most of the Somoza era. Despite this strengthening economic base in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the data in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 and in Figures 7.1 through 7.6, reveal that the regime failed to make much real progress in education. Following the 1972 Managua earthquake government spending in general boomed, but education spending expressed as a percent of GDP -- a measure of relative national education effort -- remained fairly constant through 1979 (Figure 7.2). The number of teachers and students at all levels grew along with the population, but there was little relative change in the fraction of the country's children who received public education (Figures 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5). As the evidence shows, these efforts would prove to be inferior to those of the succeeding regimes. Low levels of literacy and high dropout rates were hidden
from the data and therefore not reflected in the following growth rates. Further, except for the slight surge between 1976 and 1978, the percent of population actually enrolled in school was the lowest of the entire period of this study (Figure 7.6).

From 1968-1979, Table 7.1 reveals that the overall growth of gross domestic product was 27 percent, and for actual government expenditures on education, 35 percent. However, within the national budget, which was expanding rapidly after the earthquake, education's percentage of overall government expenditures actually shrank by 63 percent. Other concerns of the regime obviously took precedence over education. The overall growth of total enrollments of elementary and secondary students was 28 percent; but for primary students only, growth was 21 percent while for secondary students (concentrated almost solely in the urban areas) it was 62 percent. For primary and secondary teachers combined, the overall growth in ranks was 22 percent. Thus the ratio of students to teachers worsened (that is, class sizes grew).

Table 7.1 and the graphic evidence reveal sharp differences between the Somoza and Sandinista eras. In terms of the political-economic context of education, the Sandinistas found themselves in an unstable situation and with shrinking resources. Figure 7.1 reveals that population continued to grow, but that the economy contracted sharply in 1981 and 1982, recovered a bit in 1984-1985, and then eroded steadily afterward. Figure 7.2 reveals that one response of the FSLN government to this shrinking resource base was to dramatically increase the role of government in the economy. The government's share of GDP rose from around 19 percent in 1979 to almost 60 percent by 1985. Unlike the Somoza

\[ \text{The cumulative changes (growth rates), mean values, and graphed data on the following pages in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 and Figures 7.1-7.6 for the three regime periods were generated from the data found in tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.5 in Chapter Four, tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 in Chapter Five, and 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, and 6.6 in Chapter Six of this paper.} \]
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Administration/Regime</th>
<th>GDP</th>
<th>Expend/Ed*</th>
<th>%Expend/Ed</th>
<th>ED</th>
<th>%GDP</th>
<th>Students (Total)</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Teachers (Total)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Somoza Regime, 1967-79 cumulative annual mean**</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>-63%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>-4.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandinistas/Junta, 1979-84 cumulative annual mean**</td>
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<td>186%</td>
<td>-17%</td>
<td>152%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<td>2.5%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
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<td>Sandinistas/Ortega Adm., 1984-90 cumulative annual mean**</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>-50%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>-40%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
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<td>-3%</td>
<td>-8.3%</td>
<td>-3.0%</td>
<td>-6.7%</td>
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<td>3.0%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
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<td>Chamorro Regime, 1990-93 cumulative annual mean**</td>
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<td>47.4%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
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Data Calculations from Tables in Chapters 4, 5, 6.

* Government expenditures on education

** Cumulative annual mean is the Cumulative change divided by the number of years in the regime
# TABLE 7.2

## MEAN VALUES OF KEY INDICATORS BY REGIME

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<tr>
<th>Admin./Regime</th>
<th>GDP</th>
<th>Expend/ED</th>
<th>%Expend/ED</th>
<th>ED %GDP</th>
<th>Students (Total)</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Teachers (Total)</th>
<th>Students (Rural)</th>
<th>Teachers (Rural)</th>
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<td>Somoza Regime 1967-79</td>
<td>2303.1</td>
<td>52,175</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>401,043</td>
<td>314,429</td>
<td>72,381</td>
<td>14,851</td>
<td>107,655</td>
<td>2,322</td>
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<td>Sandinista Junta 1979-84</td>
<td>2320.7</td>
<td>94,016</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>633,938</td>
<td>499,753</td>
<td>123,233</td>
<td>19,060</td>
<td>202,225</td>
<td>5,787</td>
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<td>2006.1</td>
<td>118,975</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>728,250</td>
<td>580,675</td>
<td>147,546</td>
<td>23,403</td>
<td>233,360</td>
<td>7,514</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1771.6</td>
<td>227,700</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>860,551</td>
<td>687,064</td>
<td>173,722</td>
<td>25,759</td>
<td>292,165</td>
<td>8,749</td>
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</table>

Figure 7.1 Population and GDP in 1980 $ (Nicaragua 1968-1993)
Figure 7.4 Instructional Staff Trends (Nicaragua 1968-1993)
Figure 7.5 Student/Teacher Ratio (Nicaragua 1968-1993)
Figure 7.6 Percent of Pop. Enrolled
In School (Nicaragua 1968-1993)
era, when education's share of GDP remained constant, under the Sandinistas, education's share of GDP almost doubled from around 3 percent to almost 6 percent (Figure 7.2).

Table 7.2 exposes the depth of disinterest in education for the Somoza regime over 12 years. For example, in comparing the mean values of the key indicators with the 11 years of Sandinista rule and the three years of the Chamorro regime, one observes that in all 10 categories Somoza's performance was the lowest. What most stands out is Somoza's low levels of rural enrollment and rural teachers.

In stark contrast, the performance demonstrated through the mean values in Table 7.2 for the Sandinista years was remarkably high. Even when one splits their 11 years into the Junta period (1979-1984) and Ortega administration (1984-1990), the difference in performance from the Somoza era is striking. Government expenditures on education rose, education as a percentage of GDP (the best overall indicator) more that doubled the efforts of the Somoza years, and thus far, has outstripped the efforts of the Chamorro regime. Elementary and secondary enrollment and teacher ranks rose. The most telling effort of the Sandinistas, however, was in the rural areas where the mean values for enrollments and teacher totals vastly exceeded those of Somoza. The Chamorro regime thus far has exhibited a continuing interest in rural education, but the effort may be driven more by a desire to undo the ideological work of the Sandinistas than to further rural public education.

By increasing education spending (both in relative and absolute terms), the revolutionary government sought to expand input into education policy and to distribute access to education more broadly, with the beneficiaries in both urban and rural areas. They spent more on education, achieving sharp increases in the numbers of teachers (Figure 7.4) and students (Figure 7.3). The massive efforts of the national literacy crusade brought well documented higher levels of literacy.
For the revolution, 1984 and 1985 were the watershed years for the impact of the Contra War. From 1979 to 1984 GDP grew 15 percent, while between 1984 and 1990 it contracted 18 percent, a reality sharply delineated in Figure 7.1. So, while population continued to grow, the economy deteriorated. Figure 7.2 reveals that education's share of GDP began to erode after 1985. To the regime's credit, however, enrollments and teachers ranks continued to swell during these years. Figure 7.3 graphs trends in the level of service to students, and Figure 7.4 plots the staffing of teachers. (In both Figures 7.3 and 7.4, levels of secondary school performance are represented by the distance between the two plotted lines that graph elementary and overall enrollment). Figures 7.3 and 7.4 also reveal the Sandinistas' relative success at delivering education during the difficult circumstances of the war. They generally managed to keep increasing the school population and instructional staff during the Contra War. Figure 7.5 plots the trends in student to teacher ratios, providing one means of evaluating educational policy success, at least in so far as one may claim that fewer students per teacher creates a better learning environment, and therefore likely better results. The Sandinistas engineered a sharp drop in the student-to-teacher ratio in the early 1980s. The erosion of these gains after 1984 may be explained by the continued increase in enrollments while the government had to divert funding from instructional staff to fighting the Contra War.

Clearly these same data, when examined for the Somoza years of 1968-1979, indicate a much weaker effort on the part of the government. The slight 1975-1976 surge in enrollment was mainly an artifact of earthquake recovery efforts, reflecting the reopening of many temporarily closed schools. The ratio of students to teachers reached its historical peak in 1973 and has declined steadily if modestly ever since.
The strategies of the democratic-centrist regime of Violeta Chamorro both restricted and expanded input into education policy. Although the data in the tables and the figures represent only 1990-1993, just three years of a regime still in power, there are some mixed trends to consider. Clearly, as Figure 7.1 and Table 7.1 indicate, the GDP remained stagnant while the population grew. GDP began a very modest recovery (its mean was 0.8 percent a year) reversing the long slide of the Ortega years. The annual average change in education expenditures by the Chamorro regime was 11.9 percent (Table 7.1), an annual increase four times greater than that of the Somoza regime, but was less than a third of the annual rate of increase in education spending -- a whopping 37.2 percent boost each year -- by the Sandinistas between 1980 and 1984.

Under Chamorro the nominal mean values for educational expenditures shown in Table 7.2 reveal a marked increase over the Somoza years and over the the Sandinistas, as well. However, the percentage of expenditures on education relative to all government expenditures is a marginally changed 11.4 percent compared to the 10.8 and 10.7 percentages during the Sandinista era. However, because public spending was declining sharply from its peak in the revolutionary era, the total share of Nicaragua's GDP going to education was also declining -- down to an annual average of 3.2 percent from a mean of 5.6 percent during the Ortega adminstration (Table 7.2).

While enrollment and teacher totals increased under the Chamorro regime, Table 7.2 and Figure 7.6 demonstrate that the mean increases in enrollments were less than they were for the entire Sandinista era, but were double that of the Somoza era. Performance was static in rural areas and both rural and urban secondary education. In the rural areas, Chamorro's government marginally increased both enrollments and the teacher corps in relation to the levels attained by the Sandinistas. The performance in secondary schooling was poorer than
that of the Somoza years. Table 7.1 indicates that the mean annual change in secondary enrollment was 4.8 percent under Somoza, peaked at 7.7 percent in the early revolutionary years before eroding to decline 1 percent per annum under Ortega, and then rebounded to a 5.7 percent secondary growth per annum in the Chamorro administration. The Chamorro government, then, has done relatively well in supplying secondary education.

Although the percent of the population enrolled in school since 1990 has varied between 21 and 23 percent, faring somewhat better that the Somoza regime, the Sandinistas apparently achieved the highest percentage of population actually enrolled. The Contra War almost certainly caused the erratic performance of the middle revolutionary years that is revealed in Figure 7.6. A high of 26 percent of the populace was enrolled in school in 1980; the percent enrolled bottomed out at 19 percent in 1986, climbing a couple of points thereafter (Figure 7.6). The figure also demonstrates that enrollments stabilized after 1986, beginning a steady climb that continues into the Chamorro administration. Furthermore, the ratio of students to teachers (Figure 7.5) shows a slight declining trend under Chamorro, reflecting that the commitment of resources to instructional staff somewhat exceeded the still-expanding school populace. Thus the Chamorro administration demonstrates a continuing commitment to delivering education, measured in terms of these global indicators.

The Chamorro regime encouraged the development of private schools, while employing a static number of teachers. What was the impact of this regime on education service delivery overall? Table 7.1 reveals that Chamorro's government increased overall educational enrollments at about 4.5 percent per year, more than had President Ortega (only 2.8 percent) but less than the revolutionary junta's 5.5 percent annual mean increase. As had the Sandinistas (and even Somoza before them), the Chamorro administration boosted
secondary education enrollments more than primary enrollments. Figure 7.6 indicates that from 1990 through 1992, between 21 and 22 percent of the total population was actually enrolled in school, a figure that the Sandinistas had exceeded briefly, albeit erratically, during the early 1980s.

The fact that the mean share of national GDP expended by government on education did not change under Chamorro demonstrates that efforts to privatize significant portions of education were proceeding very slowly. In fairness, the available data only cover a bit over two years of Violeta Chamorro's term, so that budgetary evidence of significant change may appear in the future. Evidence was also cited in chapter six that the government was pursuing policies intended to privatize some schools and to provide public subsidies to mixed public-private educational centers as well. Moreover, the general decline in the Nicaraguan economy over the prior several years had erected a serious obstacle to education privatization -- most Nicaraguans would be unable to afford private school tuitions.

In summary, all the data taken together over time suggest that with the slight exception of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Nicaragua's GDP was sluggish, static, or in decline. In education, the Somoza regime in general demonstrated the poorest performance as shown by the mean values of the indicators. The Sandinista regimes demonstrated the best education performance even with the burden of the Contra War and its economic drain. The Chamorro administration thus far certainly has demonstrated a clear commitment to education by turning in a better than average performance, particularly in the provision of teachers. Further, in just three years, her regime has remained well ahead of the Somoza regime by all indicators.

Education spending as a percentage of GDP provides a good overall indicator as to the significance of education for Nicaraguan governments. Figure 7.2 demonstrates that the
Somoza regime's performance was essentially static. In contrast, the Sandinista regimes accelerated overall spending. The Chamorro regime thus far has outperformed the Somoza era but not matched the revolutionary effort. Secondary schooling in general and particularly in the rural areas progressed the least in the Somoza era, the most in the Sandinista era, and had a better performance in the Chamorro era than in the Somoza years. The Contra War clearly took its toll on education under the Sandinistas, but school enrollments kept increasing, an indication that the adult masses had begun to understand the importance of education for their children and themselves.

Regime and Policy Shifts: Some Notable Issues

The policy changes of the revolutionary era were ambitious and produced mixed results. The Revolution's achievements included creating a national textbook industry, revising curricula particularly for language arts and the sciences, encouraging teachers and students to apply knowledge to everyday problems, expanded technical education, and greatly improved access to public schools—enrollment doubled between 1978 and 1983 and the number of teachers increased threefold from 1978 to 1988 (Arnove, p. 17-18). The Revolution's policy failures stem largely from the counter revolution and economic decline.

The war situation and the deteriorating economy took their toll on educational budgets, negatively affecting both enrollments and the quality of schooling at all levels. During the first years of the revolutionary government, education and health accounted for a majority of national expenditures. In 1984, allocations to these sectors were frozen. By 1988, education and health received about 25 percent of the national budget, and the military received more than 50 percent of the budget; prior to the beginning of large scale hostilities, national defense received less than 20 percent. Between 1981 and 1988 expenditures per person in Nicaragua on education (in constant U.S. dollars) declined from approximately $38 to $20. (Arnove, p. 23)
By 1988, the Contra War had sharply affected education. The Contras destroyed 46 schools, seriously damaged 21 others, forced the closing of 550 schools situated in dangerous zones, and caused a teacher shortage in certain areas. These problems combined to deny all instruction to 45,000 students. By 1988 18.7 percent of Nicaraguan children under the age of 15 had been identified as educationally at risk. Grave shortages of school supplies, instructional materials, copiers, telephones, typewriters, and paper led to difficulty in maintaining operational schools (Arnove, 1994: pps. 23-25). The growing number of children and youth not attending school at all exacerbated the literacy rate. That rate which had risen from 45-50 percent to 88 percent between 1979 and 1983, fell to 68 percent between 1987 and 1989 (Arrien, 1994: p. 172).

The Chamorro government had the opportunity to make education policy in peacetime, but the Nicaraguan economy remained troubled. An emergent debate in education policy during the Chamorro regime centered on whether education should promote conflict or reconciliation. The number of contentious education-related issues in her administration has been great. The litigants include the state, civil society, the Catholic Church, and private schools (both religious and secular). The prospect for using education to promote national political reconciliation has diminished in direct relation to this conflict.

Conflict has erupted over what values will be taught in school and how: the role of the state in the governance and financing of formal education, with the particular subsets of decentralization, privatization, and autonomy for the indigenous regions of the country, the role of parents and community organizations versus that of teachers' unions in determining education policy and practice, what levels of education should be emphasized and to what extent education should be free at various levels. (Arnove, 1994: p. 75)
One irony of education policy in Nicaragua is that the revolutionary regimes had the most expansive and open approach to education -- the inclusion of input from all sorts of teachers. The Sandinistas permitted a variety of teachers unions even though the main teachers union, ANDEN, was pro-Sandinista. There was no effort to outlaw teacher organizations as had been true of the Somoza regime, or to delegitimize selected teacher unions as the Chamorro regime has done. Overall then, there has been a greater attempt to control teachers in the rightist and democratic-centrist regimes than during the Marxist-led revolution.

Statistical Analysis: The Effects of Regime Change and the Contra War on Education Spending

This section explores further the empirical data available on how regime change in Nicaragua affected education policy -- in particular how it affected education spending. The major hypothesis of this study is that the ideological differences among the three Nicaraguan regimes studied would sharply affect education policy and policy performance. I have argued above that the most important and useful measure of education output by Nicaraguan regimes is the percent of GDP devoted to funding education. This constitutes a measure of the nation's overall commitment of its resources to the provision of education services. The following analysis evaluates the effect of regime changes -- from Somoza (1969-1979) to the Sandinistas (1979-1990) to Chamorro (1990-1993) -- on education spending expressed as a percent of GDP per capita.

Theories about how ideology would affect regimes' education spending suggested that the authoritarian Somoza regime would pursue a restrictive education spending policy (that is, that education spending as a percent of GDP would be very low). The leftist coalition led by the Sandinistas was expected to pursue an expansive education spending
policy (education spending would reach a much higher percent of GDP than under Somoza). The Chamorro government was predicted to have both expansive and restrictive traits, with their net impact on education finance such that spending in GDP terms would likely fall somewhere between that of the two previous regimes.

Because regimes' spending on social policy is driven not only by ideological preferences but by other social forces as well, considerable attention has been given in the prior analysis to powerful economic and political forces that appear to have shaped education policy. During the revolution in particular, one exceedingly important such politico-economic event was the Contra war of the late 1980s. By requiring massive military mobilization and defense spending, the war undermined the Nicaraguan economy and dramatically reordered the Ortega administration's spending priorities toward war and away from education. Therefore, a secondary hypothesis is that, at its greatest intensity, the Contra War sharply reduced the Sandinista regime's ability to fund education.

These hypotheses may be tested using 1969-1993 data on education spending as a percent of GDP in a time series regression analysis of the effect of the independent variables prior spending patterns, regimes, and the war. The regression model to be tested contends that education spending in a given year in Nicaragua (EdSpn,) is a function of the prior year's education spending (EdSpn_{t-1}), the presence of the Sandinista regime (SAND, - a dummy variable scored 1 during the revolution years and 0 for other years), the presence of the Chamorro regime (CHAM, - a dummy variable scored 1 during the Chamorro administration years and 0 for other years), and the Contra war (WAR_{t-1} - a 1-year lagged dummy variable scored 1 during the worst years of the war and 0 for other years):

$$EdSpn_t = b_0 + b_1 EdSpn_{t-1} + b_2 SAND_t + b_3 CHAM_t + b_4 WAR_{t-1} + E_t$$

A graphic representation of this model may be seen in Figure 7.7, which illustrates the observed trends in Nicaraguan education spending as a percent of GDP, as well as
demarcating with vertical lines the beginning of the Sandinista revolution, the Chamorro administration, and the Contra war.

The results of an ordinary least squares regression for this equation for the years 1969 through 1993 is presented in Table 7.3.

**TABLE 7.3**

**OLS REGRESSION RESULTS:**
**EDUCATION SPENDING AS PERCENT OF GDP, 1969-1993**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-Ratio</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>2.198</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Spending( _t-1 )</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>9.529</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandinista Regime</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>.241</td>
<td>3.522</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamorro Regime</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contra War( _t-1 )</td>
<td>-1.117</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>-4.324</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Adjusted R\(^2\)  | .918 |
| F                   | 69.001, p= .000 |
| Durbin's h          | .110, p= .913 |

The regression estimates are consistent with the hypothesized relationships: Education spending as a percent of GDP over the 25 years examined is positively influenced by the prior year’s spending, positively influenced by the Sandinista regime, and negatively influenced by the Contra war. No significant effect was detected for the Chamorro regime. The model accounts for nearly 92 percent of the variance of education spending and is highly statistically significant.

Diagnostic tests for serial correlation, functional form, and normality detected no significant difficulties with the model; however, the diagnostic for heteroscedasticity indicated a possible problem. Accordingly, White's (1980) heteroscedastic-consistent standard errors were computed. The resulting t-ratios proved to be wholly consistent with the findings in Table 7.3 and are therefore not presented here.
The statistical results also provide a means to estimate the relative impacts of the Sandinista regime and the Contra war on education spending. Regarding the size of the estimated effects in the educational spending model, the lagged endogenous variable (education spending at t-1) gives the equation a dynamic property. Thus, although the immediate impact on education spending of the Somoza regime to Sandinista regime shift is only 0.849 percent of GDP per capita, the long run effect through the revolution is much larger when corrected for the lagged endogenous variable: $0.849 \div (1.0 - 0.789) = 4.02$ percent of GDP. Of course, the realization of this long run effect was prevented by the onset of the Contra war. The war's immediate negative effect on education spending was -1.117 percent.
of GDP. As above, correcting for the lagged endogenous variable permits a long-run impact estimate: \(-1.117 / (1.0-.789) = -5.9\) percent. Thus had the war continued it would have reduced educational spending by fully 5.9 percent of GDP.

In sum, the statistical evidence is consistent with the hypothesis that the regime change associated with the Sandinista revolution had a marked positive effect upon education spending, as predicted. But also as hypothesized, that effect was negated by the Contra war.\(^{19}\)

**Education Policy and Regime Legitimacy**

It seems clear that Somoza's (1967-1979) poor performance in education policy stemmed from his fear that education might generate unpredictable and unacceptable change. Therefore, to sustain his personal authority he demanded compliance with his education policy through restrictive funding and other repressive practices. Education thus served to maintain the status quo. His increases in education budgets as revolutionary sentiment grew were merely diversions or thinly disguised counterinsurgency programs. Education policy was intended to produce compliant, passive, and ignorant citizens who would not challenge the regime's right to rule. The aforementioned control of teachers and the manipulation of teachers unions were a classic means to cement this right to rule.

The Sandinistas during the revolutionary era (1979-1990) appeared willing to risk some of the legitimacy acquired through the revolution by using expansive policies. The allowance for input from divergent teachers' unions as well as ANDEN demonstrate a desire

\(^{19}\)The author wishes to extend her appreciation to Professor Harold C. Clarke of the University of North Texas for his interest in and assistance with the statistical tests produced from the data in the various tables. His insight that the ocular observation of the data would hold statistical significance was correct.
for acceptance by the regime for their right to rule. While the policies were managed by the regime, they were somewhat less isomorphic than one might expect of such a Marxist-dominated coalition. The Sandinistas even sought balance in education policy input by successfully soliciting educational aid and materials from both democratic and non-democratic countries. They appeared to believe that their legitimacy would grow if they expanded access to education, especially informed by revolutionary ideology. They held this view knowing that both expanded educational opportunity and debate about education policy could generate conflict and even opposition. One could speculate that had the Sandinistas in their efforts not so laced instructional materials with Marxist overtones, their education policies might have promoted reconciliation with anti-Sandinista forces. Certainly, inclusion of local communities and locally respected leaders in education policy was both decentralizing and legitimizing, a rare combination for leftist regimes.

As for the Chamorro regime (1990-1996), UNO's 55 percent electoral victory over the Sandinistas stood as a clear mandate for change. But rather than build upon that victory and the revolution's prior accomplishments, President Chamorro turned education policy into a tool to delegitimize the revolution. Her regime adamantly sought to drive out all vestiges of Sandinista education policies. This reactionary response by Chamorro's regime was designed to distance her government from the Sandinistas and to bolster her position with the fragile UNO coalition. In so doing, her regime rejected the education achievements of the revolution and introduced new ideological biases to education policy making. The irony of her government's position on education (that the role of the state should be reduced by cutting MED budgets, privatization, decentralization of schools, introducing user fees and ridding the system selectively of certain types of teachers) was that these very techniques gave a controlling and isomorphic twist to education policy. As such one could argue that
her reforms -- originally designed to uncouple ideology from policy -- made education policy equally ideological to that of her predecessors.

The dramatic alterations of education policy and finance in these three cases over two and a half decades demonstrate the fragility of public policy before powerful endogenous and exogenous forces. The rapid population growth, eroding economic resources for education, the manipulation of education for ideological purposes, and internal turmoil all made a rational approach to education very difficult. One suspects that education policy making, the education delivery system, and the actual quality of instruction in Nicaragua have all suffered significantly because of such ideologically driven turmoil.
CHAPTER VIII

REGIMES, EDUCATION POLICY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT:
A PARADOX

There are linkages between regimes, their education policies and political development in Nicaragua, and perhaps in other developing countries. The effort in this study to identify these linkages, however, has uncovered paradoxes about general development theory and an unpredictability in Latin American development theory.

In part these paradoxes stem from the erroneous scholarly assumption that the stages components of development move forward in a particular progression and are driven more exclusively by economics than politics. Scholars have argued that development requires change in various aspects of societies and polities -- some of them apparently mutually contradictory. How does a developing country justify stability without democracy, modernization without economic dependency, and legitimacy without institutionalization?

Second, scholars generally concur that a literate and educated society is necessary to achieve development, virtually irrespective of how development is defined. The content, structure, and beneficiaries of education, however, are all strongly conditioned by who controls education. A strong, stable state or a weak, unstable state, for example, may be neither modern nor democratic. The regime in power may also be strong or weak. Third, political accord and national consensus, important for development, are affected by education policy since it can be charged with highly emotional value issues.

A further paradox exists when education is wrapped in a particular ideological package. If education is a basic requisite for modernization and economic independence it
can not also depend upon the ideological whims of a regime. Yet a regime may feel compelled to use education as a tool for its own legitimacy. This creates a dilemma. Arnove (1994) argues that education must develop its own separate and depoliticized arena -- devoid of political manipulation -- in order to provide a foundation for education with cumulative successful results.

As to the case of Nicaragua, Latin American scholars have maintained that change occurs not with regime change but when contending elites negotiate it. Elite power comes from the various resources they possess, and these are often argued to matter more than particular rulers of the moment. The hypotheses this study proposed, however, have argued quite the opposite -- that regimes matter. The empirical findings reported confirm that regime change does indeed affect policy.

In linking education and development, ambiguity exists in delineating the influence of the regime versus that of the state. This has been amply demonstrated in this paper. Regimes come and go and make changes in education policies, but the extent to which those policies are implemented and/or manipulated by the bureaucracy that remains is clearly another area demanding investigation. Which has a greater hold on development -- the machinery of the state, or the policy of the individual regime?

In the Nicaraguan case, whereas the Sandinista regimes did not see education as a threat to their development goals or their power, the Somoza regime saw education as a handmaiden to political change intolerable to its goals, and therefore stalled it. The democratic-center of Chamorro, on the other hand, perceived education less as a means of development through reconciliation with the Sandinistas, and more as a means of establishing its legitimacy through redefining the education conflict.
There is a link between the choice of either restrictive or expansive strategies in education and the regime's perception of what development means and how it occurs. For Nicaragua, as this paper has demonstrated, regime (ideology) was an independent variable that drove general education policy and education finance. General revolutionary goals shaped spending until the Contra War began in earnest in the mid 1980s. After that, until 1990 fiscal needs imposed by the war and the need to protect the revolution sharply reduced the priority of education spending, although the Sandinistas struggled to keep delivering education albeit in considerably reduced circumstances and resources. From 1990-1993 education spending facilitated the contextual aspects of general education policy; that is, the needs for teachers and materials were recognized and partially provided.

Over the long haul, education spending was arbitrarily manipulated by Somoza, first expanded by the Sandinistas to promote development and then curtailed under the duress of the Contra War necessities, and then reshaped by Chamorro to redistribute revenues and redirect the whole course of education. Public education is expensive. However, the Sandinistas have demonstrated that a regime that sees the long term value of education can promote it with less than adequate financing, in a less than democratic setting, and with a less than a stable socio-political environment that one could scarcely describe as modern.

Conclusion

This empirical study has focused on how regime politics affects education in a developing society. It has demonstrated that the ideology of a regime can politicize and drive education policies and that a change in regimes can in fact produce different public policies. Education strategies come from varying motivations; personal attention by the regime's leaders are still significant in Nicaragua as they are in other Latin American countries. The Nicaraguan case reveals that a regime may pursue legitimacy through its education policies,
of the three studied, the Sandinista regime took the greatest risks in doing so. The
Nicaraguan case also demonstrates how complex may be the relationship between political
development and the ideological manipulation of education. Education enhances
development, but development may not enhance education. The educational progress
needed to build a society may fall victim to inconsistent public policy. This is particularly
true if each successive regime employs education policy as a practical tool of power.

This study of 26 years of Nicaraguan public education policy across the regimes of
Anastasio Somoza Debayle, the Sandinistas, and Violeta de Barrios Chamorro confirmed the
three suggested hypotheses. It demonstrated that (1) Regimes' ideological proclivities have
profoundly affected education policy; (2) the politicization strategies observed in Nicaragua
were different than the literature on Latin American regimes would have predicted, in that
changes in rulers in Nicaragua did produce dramatic changes in policy; (3) these changes
were unexpectedly different from what typical ideological stances would indicate in that
control of central policy was less pronounced under the revolutionary regime than its centrist
successor; (4) education policy was manipulated by each of these regimes to bolster its
legitimacy; (5) the statistical significance of an OLS regression on certain variables to test
the hypotheses was high (R=.91) as were the t-ratios; (6) the secondary hypothesis, that at
its greatest intensity, the Contra War sharply reduced the Sandinista regime's ability to fund
education was confirmed; (7) U.S. developmental assistance to Nicaragua varied widely
during the era studied; (8) during the period studied, the economy of Nicaragua was volatile
and for much of the era in a protracted and grave decline; (9) internal divisions in
Nicaraguan society, while constantly changing, were consistent in their omnipresence and
intensity.
In the course of this study, I have suggested that politics as well as economics should be considered in explaining patterns of regime change, education policy, and development. More efforts, however, should be made to combine these two powerful elements to understand the political economy of education. There is little question, for example, that the strong need that developing countries such as Nicaragua have for external developmental assistance in education, makes their education policy quite vulnerable to external pressure. Teacher preparation, appropriate teacher salaries, positive retention rates in schools, and rural education were consistently difficult educational needs to sustain in Nicaragua from 1967-1993. To add to the difficulty, they have been tied to international political and economic pressures.

Finally, the significance of my empirical investigation is that, first of all, it questions the general assumptions about developmental behavior and regimes in Latin America. In chapter two it was shown that, between 1970 and 1982, the public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP in all of Latin America rose from 3.4 percent to 4.4 percent, with an average of 3.8 percent. During the same era, the Somoza regime fell below those spending rates, while the Sandinista regimes exceeded them. Over the course of the next 11 years, Nicaragua's investment in education grew even greater. The cliche that the more developing countries change the more they stay the same, may not be so. The Sandinistas introduced education to rural Nicaraguans and decentralized education policy and services -- both considerable departures from the centralized tactics of most Latin American regimes.

This study also demonstrates how delicate educational progress can be. For Nicaragua, the great literacy gains made from 1979-1983 quickly eroded because of the inability to provide essential literacy maintenance training. Public schools deteriorated dramatically in the late 1980s even though enrollment numbers remained high.
For purposes of future research, this study raises crucial questions about the political economy of public education. If the economies of these three Nicaraguan regimes from 1968-1993 had been consistently moderate to good, would spending levels on these items and other aspects of education have been higher? Would the spending have been authorized to reinforce the ideological position of the regime? Would secondary education have been more successful in the Sandinista era with or without greater funding? Will the Chamorro regime give greater subsidies to religious educational institutions creating a kind of religious elitism?

Nicaragua has a presidential election in November 1996, but Violeta Barrios de Chamorro is not a candidate. The Sandinistas, now divided into two parties, will seek to recapture the presidency. Antonio Lacayo, Minister of the Presidency, will seek the presidency if the constitution permits, and the conservative mayor of Managua -- once a member of Somoza's Liberal Nationalist Party -- will also run. The 1996 election and its aftermath should provide a fascinating opportunity to observe how a more conservative regime or a recapturing of the government by the Sandinistas affects education.
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