

P. J. O'Rourke

MOOD SWINGS IN MANAGUA

The father of modern McCarthyism chronicles the Great Nicaraguan Bourgeois Counterrevolution.

On the morning of February 26, the day after Violeta Chamorro's victory over Danny Ortega, I walked into the Inter-Continental hotel in Managua and Bianca Jagger was sitting alone in the lobby. Bianca had been ubiquitous during the election campaign: there was Bianca looking smart in an unconstructed linen jacket and yellow socks to match, Bianca looking serious with press pass and camera, Bianca looking thoughtful listening to Jimmy Carter, Bianca looking concerned conferring with Senator Christopher Dodd, Bianca looking committed in simple tennis shoes and neatly mussed hair, Bianca looking important wearing sunglasses after dark. But this morning Bianca looked . . . her age. Here we had a not very bright, fortyish, discarded rock star wife, trapped in the lonely hell of the formerly cute—one bummed out show-biz lefty.

I was feeling great myself, ready to turn somersaults over the Ortega defeat, full of good cheer and pleased with all the world. But then the forlorn, sagging little shape of Bianca caught my eye, and, all of a sudden, I felt EVEN BETTER.

I hadn't come to Nicaragua prepared for such joy. Like most readers of papers and watchers of newscasts, I thought the Sandinistas were supposed to win this one. I'm a member of the working press; you'd think I'd know better than to listen to journalists. But there's a little bit of the pigeon in every good confidence man. I even believed the February 21 ABC/*Washington Post* poll that had Ortega leading Chamorro by 16 percentage points. That is—I blush to admit this—I accepted the results of an opinion poll taken in a country where it was illegal to hold certain opinions. You can imagine the

poll-taking process: "Hello, Mr. Peasant, I'm an inquisitive and frightening stranger. God knows who I work for. Would you care to ostensibly support the dictatorship which controls every facet of your existence, or shall we put you down as in favor of the UNO opposition and just tear up your ration card right here and now?"

Furthermore, when I arrived in Nicaragua I found an Ortega political machine that was positively Bushian in its relentless drumming on the issue-free upbeat. Danny's smiling (I presume they used a photo-retoucher) face and Danny's heartthrob-of-the-poli-sci-department moustache were everywhere to be seen. As was Danny—pestering babies, attempting dance steps, wearing Ed Begley, Jr. the-dog-was-sick-on-the-carpet shirts and tossing free baseballs into crowds of squealing totalitarianism fans. The Sandinistas' black and red, doberman mouth party colors were painted anywhere paint could stick. Sandinista songs played from every radio. The

Danny for President slogan *todo sera mejor* (meaning "everything will be better" and not, as I momentarily thought, "major dried toads") was as perfect an all-purpose campaign promise as I have ever heard. There were Sandinista music videos with singing and dancing that could send Paula Abdul back to wagging pom-poms for the L.A. Lakers. And there were Sandinista ad campaigns tailored to every segment of the electorate. A billboard for city youth (voting age is 16 in Nicaragua) showed a moonstruck couple in Ortega T-shirts walking hand-in-hand toward a voting booth beneath the headline, "When you do it for the first time, do it for love." Banners for the countryside showed a fierce portrait of Ortega with the motto *Daniel Es Mi Gallo*, "Daniel Is My Fighting Cock." (These can now be profitably recycled by the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise outlets soon to open in Nicaragua.)

I confess I believed the Sandys had all the corners nailed down, and I spent the last couple of days before the elec-

tion committing that original sin of journalism, "writing the lead on the way to the ballpark." What was I going to say about a loathsome Sandinista victory? I supposed I'd have to natter on about the unfair advantages of using state resources for party ends, about how Sandinista control of the transit system prevented UNO supporters from attending rallies, how Sandinista domination of the army forced soldiers to vote for Ortega and how Sandinista bureaucracy kept \$3.3 million of U.S. campaign aid from getting to UNO while Danny spent \$3 million donated by overseas pinks, and millions and millions more from the Nicaraguan treasury, and so on.

But this seemed like weak tea, cry-baby stuff. No, I thought, I'll have to go shoveling in the manure pile of political science, trying to uncover the appeal that Marxism and other infantile world views still hold for people. One nice thing about being a conservative, at least I wouldn't feel betrayed by the masses. Democracy is only one of human liberty's safeguards and not always the most effective one. Back in the U.S. we've got a House of Representatives full of bed-wetting liberals to prove it.

"The Dog Is Dead But the Tail Still Wags." That was what I planned to call this article. (It's still a good title—I'll save it for my review of Christopher Hitchens's next book.)

Thus I was in a grim frame of mind when I went to the press conference held by that most ex- of America's ex-Presidents, Jimmy Carter. The press conference was at the Sandinistas' imposing media complex, one of the few buildings in Managua that won't fall down if you urinate against the side of it. This propaganda palace was built with money donated by patsy Swedes, named after their bumped-off prime minister, Olof Palme, and hence called, by the small contingent of con-



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servatives present, the "Good Socialist Press Center."

Carter was the head of one of the three principal international election monitoring groups which were fluttering around Nicaragua pronouncing everything they saw fair and equitable. There was the U.N. ("the turkeys"), the OAS ("the chickens"), and Carter's group, the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government ("the geese").

What Carter thought he was doing, besides proving there are worse things than Marines that the U.S. can send to Nicaragua, I don't know. But there he was, the man who gave the store away in the first place, still grinning like a racoon eating fish guts out of a wire brush and still talking in that prissy, nose-first, goober-grabber accent, except this time in Spanish: "... new-WAY-vuh Knicker-RAH-wuh deh-muh-crut-TICK-uh ..."

Carter oozed moral equivalence. "There have been serious problems in the campaign process on both sides," said Carter. "We have to give credit to the Nicaraguan people for establishing an excellent electoral process," said Carter. "If the election is certified as honest and fair, the United States should lift sanctions," said Carter. It's a shame Jimmy was too young to be an international observer at Germany's elections in 1932. "We have to give credit to the German people for establishing an excellent electoral process." Maybe he could have gotten Hitler some help rearming.

The "press" at the press conference were a dirty and confused bunch, even by press corps standards. Inspection of credentials showed most of them to be correspondents for the Xeroxed newsletter of the Berkeley High-Colonic Liberation Front or television reporters from the Boulder Reincarnation for Peace Coalition's public access cable program. When a genuine newsman asked Carter about a report of UNO poll-watchers being arrested, the backpack journalists hissed.

A number of celebrity fellow travelers were in Nicaragua for the vote-off—Jackson Browne, Jimmy Cliff, the Sandinistas' Washington lawyer Paul (where's-the-Smith-Act-when-we-need-it) Reichler, and Ed Asner, who didn't look like he'd missed any meals due to the injustice of the capitalist economic system. But the real show was these *sandalistas*: prosperous, educated lefties from the United States who've flocked to Nicaragua for a decade to ... well, to help. Although it's something of a puzzle why rebellious middle-class Americans went to Nicaragua to help Sandinistas wreck Central America, instead of, say, going to South Africa to help Boers chase schoolchildren with whips or to Uganda to help Idi Amin eat people.

Some say the *sandalistas* are just young and dumb. But those folks are only half right. At first glance the Birkenstock Bolshies seem young. They wear "youth" clothes and have adolescent body language—constantly distributing hugs and touches and squirming with emotion rather than sitting still in thought. But, looking closely at the uniform ponytails and earrings (many of the women wear them too), I notice the tresses that were still long in back were oftentimes gone on top, and, the lady *sandalistas*, their underarm hair was streaked with gray.

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A number of college-age kids were present, too—earnest and homely and not at all the type who would have been lefties in my day of high fashion revolt. In 1968 these kids would have been in the ham radio club or Future Stenographers of America.

The Ortega-snugglers were dressed as though they were going to a Weather Underground Days of Rage costume party. They were all in jean skirts and draw-string pants, clogs, folk art jewelry and tie-dyed tank tops—fashions fully twenty years out of style. I wonder what my hip friends and I in the summer of love would have thought about people wearing zoot suit jackets and reat pleat pants with key chains dangling to the ground.

The Carter press conference was on Saturday morning, the day before the election. That afternoon I attended a less complacent press conference given by the Center for Democracy at the Inter-Continental Hotel. The same bunch of backpack journalists was here, too, hissing even before anybody asked a question. Some of these lifestyle leftovers had gone so far as to don the red and black Sandinista neckerchief, an item of apparel identical in design to the neckerchief worn by the Boy Scouts of America. The effect was of a scout troop gone deeply, seriously wrong, growing older and older but never graduating to Explorer and earning merit badges in "Lenin," "marijuana" and "poor hygiene."

I hadn't been keeping up to speed on Nicaraguan nonsense and had no idea why the lefties were heckling the Center for Democracy. The center is one of those painstakingly bipartisan, painfully fair organizations that I myself

usually heckle. CFD was the first election monitoring group invited to Nicaragua. It was invited by both sides and had been observing the election campaign since spring of last year. But now the CFD's credentials were downgraded so that its observers couldn't enter polling places, and more than fifty CFD observers had been denied Nicaraguan visas at the last minute.

The trouble was that the Center for Democracy got caught telling the truth. CFD observers were at an UNO rally in the town of Masatepe on December and they saw a Sandinista mob set

and, "Don't you think it's idiosyncratic that yours is the only observer group complaining about credential problems?" after which half the press conference attendees would clap. One particularly impassioned and bearded fellow named Carlos explained how the fact that the CFD was an observer group in the first place and came to Nicaragua at all proved its members had no respect for Nicaraguan sovereignty. Carlos is a professor at Glendale College in California where he teaches "Chicano Studies."

I'd gone to Nicaragua with the head of the National Forum Foundation, Jim Denton. Forum has been sponsoring interns from newly decommunized Eastern Europe, bringing them to the United States so that they can see how democratic institutions work and learn to avoid making terrible mistakes like electing Jimmy Carter. Denton took two of these interns, Slawek Gorecki from Poland and Martin Weiss from Czechoslovakia, to Managua. Jim and I thought the *sandalistas* were funny. Martin and Slawek did not. They were sickened and enraged that citizens of a free nation would go somewhere to promote dictatorship. Even more than disgusted, they were mystified. Trying to explain American lefties to Martin and Slawek was like—simile fails me—trying to explain American lefties to two reasonable and intelligent people who'd never seen any.

Martin and Slawek—and Jim and I too, for that matter—preferred meeting with Comandante Rafael Solis, president of the Sandinista National Assembly. Here was a comprehensible scumbag, somebody who was making a buck off the evil he espoused.

Solis was master of the world-weary idealist act—lots of rueful smiles and



care-laden brow rubs. His manners were gracious and welcoming, his grin warm and genuine. He was the kind of Commie who'd never ship anyone to a concentration camp in a boxcar, he'd send them in a taxi.

Solis said he was confident of an Ortega victory and of a large majority in the new National Assembly. But was he? With the improved sensitivity and increased intelligence that hindsight brings, I detect some loyal opposition bullpen warm-up from Solis. He claimed he was looking forward to national reconciliation and hoped the UNO parties would play a part in it. He dismissed the statement by Interior Minister (and head of the secret police) Tomas Borge that the Sandinistas were "prepared to lose the election but not to lose power."

"That is," said Solis with the aplomb of a born politician, "campaign rhetoric." He touted a "perestroika atmosphere" in Nicaragua, predicted "foreign policy compromises," and, in response to needling from Slawek, said, "As to the changes in Eastern Europe, I haven't heard any criticism from the Sandinista leadership. We think these changes are positive, democratic." And he went on to claim that Nicaragua would be making the same changes soon and, also, had made them already.

At sunrise on election morning we headed around Lake Managua and north into the mountains, visiting polling places in Sebaco and Matagalpa and little villages in between. Then we drove farther north to Jinotega in what had been contra territory. Everywhere we went it was the same: awful roads through beautiful scenery to lousy towns. The whole country is cracked, shattered, dirty, worn-out. Everything dates from the Somoza era or before. Ten years of revolution have

produced nothing but the Olof Palme Press Center. Even the lamest People's Republic cosmetic touches were missing. Sandinista graffiti is the only fresh paint in Nicaragua. The nation looks—and smells—like that paradigm of socialism, a public restroom.

The voting was done in dingy schoolrooms with all the window glass broken or missing and bare wires running across the ceiling to 15-watt light bulbs. Every voter had the ballot-marking process explained to him personally so that the election went forward at the speed of mammal evolution. People

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were waiting in line by the hundreds to vote.

Each polling place was run by a brisk, snippy, managing Sandinista woman of middle age, the kind of woman who, in a free society, is known as "my first wife." Denton, Martin, Slawek, and I didn't have the proper credentials to enter polling places, but we did anyway and, for the most part, got away with it—though at the price of being treated like ex-husbands.

The U.N., the OAS, and the Carter group were all going around doing about the same thing we were in the way of checking for vote fraud. That is, they popped their heads in and made sure there was no Sandinista with a pistol in a toddler's ear saying, "Vote for Danny or the rug monkey gets it." We didn't see any cheating like that, and the U.N., the OAS, and the Carter group said they didn't either.

We did see a truckload of soldiers being hauled around to vote. "Who are you for?" we yelled. "Cinco! Cinco!" they shouted, holding up five fingers to indicate they were voting for the fifth line on the ballot, the Sandinistas. "Uno," said one little fellow in the back, and they all giggled and made as if to pummel him.

In the village of San Ramon we saw some horseplay. The men and women had decided to get in separate lines. Then the line of men shoved the line of women off the school porch and into the rain. The women confided to

us that the men were going to vote for Ortega.

And we saw former Democratic presidential hopeful Bruce Babbitt standing around at one polling place, looking clueless. Jim Denton said, "That's Bruce Babbitt," but for the life of me I couldn't remember who Bruce Babbitt was even though I'd covered the 1988 primary races. I guess this tells us all we need to know about Bruce's political future.

The only Nicaraguan we heard complain was a guy who wasn't allowed to vote because he was drunk. "He admits that he's drunk," the Sandinista policeman told us. "Everybody makes mistakes," the drunk told us. And we told the policeman, "They let Teddy Kennedy vote in the Senate."

When we came back through Sebaco late in the afternoon, some of the same people who'd been standing in line to vote at seven that morning were still waiting. "We've been in line since four in the morning, since three in the morning, since two in the morning," one person told us with cheerful rural vagueness about time. "And if it is necessary we will stay here until . . . ten," said another man, naming the latest hour of the evening he could think of offhand.

Of course people don't stand in line for twelve hours in drizzly weather at the ass end of nowhere to vote for the status quo. So that was three hints I'd been given that Ortega might lose. But there's no getting through to the highly perceptive. It wasn't until another journalist told me the Sandinistas were in trouble that I believed it.

We'd gone back to the Olof Palme

center to wait for returns. Around 11:00 p.m. a network television newsmen with (don't be shocked) left-wing connections came by looking agitated. "P. J., I was just over at Sandy headquarters and something's gone seriously wrong," he said, meaning the opposite. "All of Ortega's people are really upset. The early returns show them getting . . ." Getting what the billboard said, when you do for the first time, you should do for love.

The UNO people had heard the same buzz and were in a mood of contained but swollen hope. Chamorro's coalition was holding its election night party at a restaurant in one of Managua's few remaining middle-class enclaves. The crowd was a model of bourgeois propriety. Occasionally someone would stand on a chair and say "Viva UNO" in a loud voice, but that was about it. The place was all clean shirts, hearty handshakes, polite honorifics, and, "How's your brother in Miami?" It was difficult to picture these decent, hard-working, prosperous, common-sensical people overthrowing a government. Sometimes it's hard to remember that bourgeois propriety is the real revolutionary force these days. All over the world we're bringing down dictatorships—or at least forcing them to go condo.

The Sandinista "victory party" was, on the other hand, a massive street disco populated by kids who in the U.S. would be selling crack, getting the name of their favorite heavy metal band tattooed on their butts, or planning a drive-by shooting. These are the last people on earth that *sandalista* types would consort with back home. But all sorts of big, homely, dirty-haired American girls in stained T-shirts and dweeby little chicken-necked American boys in ripped jeans were fraternizing the hell out of the lumpen Nicaraguans (who were dressed in their Sunday best, by the way).

There was no evidence of Danny difficulties at the street dance, really no trace of politics except the general air of thuggishness that hangs over all "mass" political movements. Lots of beer and cane liquor was being consumed and much smooching in the shadows was being done and fist-fights and up-chucks were beginning to dot the crowd. After half an hour of walking around with our hands over our wallet pockets, we decided our little group of *wing-tipistas* belonged back at the Chamorro party or—even better by the standards of the bourgeois propriety revolution now afoot—home, asleep in our beds.

I awoke to the sound of lugubrious Spanish on the television. It was Danny Boy giving his concession



speech, old Landslide Daniel. I understand Jimmy Carter had tracked Danny down in the middle of the night and told him—loser-to-loser—the jig was up. The Sandinistas had done everything they could to insure the validity of this election in the eyes of the world. Now they had to eat what they cooked. Quite a bit of “crow in red sauce” has been served around the globe this year.

Danny’s speech was a long one. There are no brief excuses for Communism. And it was punctuated with more pauses for dramatic effect than a high school production of *Macbeth*. Lined up behind Daniel were most of the Sandinista nomenclatura, pouting and sniffing and generally looking like dear Uncle Bill had died and left his fortune to the cat. At the end of Danny’s speech, he and his pals raised their fists in the air and warbled the Sandinista battle anthem, the one with the last line about Yankees being “the enemies of all humankind,” singing us farewell in the manner of the Mickey Mouse Club except this crowd couldn’t carry a tune on a shovel. The TV cameras pulled back to show the Olof Palme press corps singing along through their tears.

Me, I was singing myself, making up little tunes and dancing and capering around:

*Benjamin Linder was blown to a flinder,
Brian Willson run o’er by a train,
Now it’s hasta luego to Danny Ortega,
And United Fruit’s come back again!*

I rushed out to gloat. I especially wanted to gloat over the Americans—the ripe suck liberals and MasterCard Marxists—see them backing and filling and blowing smoke out their pants cuffs. At the Inter-Continental, across the lobby from Bianca, Paul Reichler was excusing the Nicaraguan people to the news media, saying they had “voted with their stomach.” The poor misguided fools. I suppose they should have voted with their ---hole, Paul Reichler. A few yards away that human rum blossom Senator Chris Dodd was telling reporters the election “wasn’t a victory for UNO. The Nicaraguan people just wanted change.” Yes, yes. And the 1988 presidential race wasn’t a victory for Republicans either. The American people just wanted Michael Dukakis ground into a heap and sold as fiber supplement.

Driving through the streets of Managua, seeing American hippy-dips all fiddle-faced and dejected, it was hard to resist the temptation to yell things out the car window. “Get a job!” Or, “What’s the matter with your legs, Toots, don’t you know ‘Fur is Dead?’” In fact I couldn’t resist it. My favorite thing to do was just make a little pistol motion with my hand

and shout, “Nicolae Ceausescu!!!”

I headed for the Olof Palme center to rank on the backpack journalists. Oh, it was almost too sweet for telling, how they bellyached and sourpussed and went around in sulks. Carlos, the professor of “Chicano Studies,” tried to look on the sunny side.

“We can’t abandon the people of Nicaragua,” he said with a straight face, and, “The struggle will continue. People will be even more committed.” But, in the end, Carlos was reduced to near-racism in his attempt to explain why the polls said Danny would win but the voters said otherwise. “It’s the Latino culture,” said Carlos. “People love to say one thing and do another.”

The younger *sandalistas* looked like they’d just seen Lee Atwater open for the Grateful Dead. They weren’t angry, really, just deeply, deeply disappointed. Here they’d blown their semester break and mom was going to have a cow when she got the VISA bill for the plane ticket, and then the Nicaraguan people went and let them down like this. But the old *sandalistas*, the New Left geezers, they looked like they’d gone to hell in a bong. It’s into the trash can with this sixties litter, and you could see they knew it. They looked like Abbie Hoffman was looking the last couple years of his life, as though every night when they go to sleep a BMW chases them through their dreams.

And in that BMW, or hoping to be there soon, were all the regular Nicaraguans down at the Eastern Market.

Were they surprised that UNO won? They laughed. “We expected victory, especially the mothers,” said a mother.

“All the mothers are happy,” said another mom.

“We hope Violeta fulfills her promises,” said the proprietress of a shoe store. “Or we’ll get rid of her too,” she added in the tone of an experienced democrat.

“If Ortega doesn’t give in, the people will rise up,” said a cobbler. “We have *other countries* that will help us.” And he nodded toward the Congressional Press Gallery I.D. I was wearing around my neck.

“What about the polls?” I asked. “Why were they so wrong?”

“People were afraid,” said a man in a barber shop.

“The same old experts who always come here came here and gave us the same old results they always give,” said the barber.

Another customer began yelling, “All we had to eat was old lard and the kind of sugar they feed to cattle!”

And that set off a passing drunk who may have been confused about geopolitics—or maybe not—but, anyway, had the right attitude. “Tomorrow, Japan!” he shouted. □

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THE EVIL EMPEROR OF IRVINE, CALIFORNIA

Larry Agran, a Jane Fonda in Tom Hayden clothing, is winning a national following as California's most ambitious left-wing mayor, with an agenda that carries far beyond the Irvine city limits.

"As an attorney myself . . . I've concluded one of the most important things we can do as attorneys or citizens generally is to take control of local government. Most smaller cities or medium-sized cities can be easily controlled politically with about five lawyers and some of their supporters. It's probably easier if you have only three lawyers and their supporters, and you just decide what kind of a community you want to live in. . . ."

—Irvine Mayor Larry Agran, speaking to the National Lawyers' Guild, June 18, 1989

Irvine, California, 55 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles, once just a vast expanse of orange groves, was founded in 1960 as the first of Orange County's master-planned "new towns." As opposed to the suburban bedroom communities of the 1950s, the idea was to create several "villages" within the city—each with its own look and feel—combining homes, workplaces, shopping, schools, and open space. The width of grass strips along the streets, the color of roof tiles on the regimented houses, the length of time garage doors could stay open—everything was ordered in the place, geographically larger than Boston and San Francisco combined. Residents voted for cityhood in 1971. By the 1980s, Irvine was one of the fastest growing cities in California, a major center of aerospace, computer, and high-tech manufacturing, and the locale *U.S. News and World Report* deemed the "best place to live in America." The city itself had long ago chosen "another day in paradise" as its motto, but that was before a serpent slipped into the garden. Today, many of Irvine's 110,000 residents are beginning to wonder whether paradise has been lost.

Aside from the hyper-planning, Irvine is an archetypical suburb, affluent but by no means chichi, where straight-laced engineers toil in low-rise glass of-

fice buildings, shop in ghastly strip malls, and drive home on wide, clogged roads. But an element of the exotic was introduced one day in 1975, when Larry Agran came to town. Raised in California's San Fernando Valley, graduated from Harvard Law School with honors, groomed as a lawyer for the ACLU and a state senate committee, Agran moved to Irvine when his wife, Phyllis, was accepted at the University of California's medical school there. He did some private legal work, then became a house-husband, and finally decided to run for elected office "largely because you look around and see what bumbling representation does exist," he once told the *Los Angeles Times*.

The decision came rather suddenly for the tame local political establishment. "He registered to vote the same day he filed to run for city council," recalls Bill Vardoulis, who was Irvine's

mayor at the time. "A guy comes on the scene nobody has ever heard of, and spends \$9,000 in a race where all you need is 12,000 votes. He had computerized mailings the likes of which we'd never seen." Two weeks before the election, an article in an obscure newspaper published by Tom Hayden's pro-rent-control Campaign for Economic Democracy and circulated on the UC Irvine campus provided a glint of what was to come: the piece listed politicians who were helping spread CED's tentacles into unsuspecting communities, including, in Irvine, Larry Agran. Vardoulis saw the article, scratched his head, and decided not to make anything of it.

In his early years on the council, Agran, now 44, was a minority of one. Painting himself as a sober, grassroots advocate of slow-growth and an environmentalist, he built up his core constituencies by beating up on the Irvine

Company, which founded the community originally and still owns about a third of its land. "It was Larry against the big bad developer," says Barbara Wiener, who served with Agran on the council for four years.

Outside of Irvine, Agran began pushing another agenda, through the 1,000-member Local Elected Officials group, which he founded in 1983. The goal was to "promote local responses to non-local matters: world peace, apartheid, nuclear weapons, Central America," Agran explains. In the course of an interview, Agran uses non-threatening, bipartisan terms to describe the movement to get cities to enact foreign policy measures, expounding on such initiatives as cultural exchanges and trade and investment links with foreign cities. This is quite reminiscent of the fraudulent manner in which he has sold himself to Irvine's electorate, but more about that later.



One need look no further than Agran's *Bulletin of Municipal Foreign Policy*, which carries articles like "Some Tips for Building Nicaraguan Sister Cities" and "Think Globally, Sue Locally," as well as endorsements from the Rev. William Sloane Coffin and Noam Chomsky, to figure out what the effort is all about. "Just the right sort of organizing effort and a very encouraging development," declaimed the esteemed Professor Chomsky. In light of the movement's credits, his enthusiasm becomes plainly understood: 900 resolutions passed around the country in favor of a nuclear weapons freeze; 118 laws banning nuclear weapons production in local jurisdictions, an effort that coincided with the failure of the freeze movement; refusals by 120 cities to cooperate in a civil defense program proposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which forced the scuttling of the plan; more than 100 policies prohibiting cities from links with

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