

tial amount of economic aid, beginning with 20,000 tons of wheat in 1980 and following with \$21 million in credits for agricultural and industrial projects. In 1981-2, the Soviets granted Nicaragua a further \$110 million in aid and credits and in the latter year agreed to purchase a substantial amount of Nicaraguan agricultural exports. By 1982, moreover, there were some 700 Nicaraguans studying in the Soviet Union; a further 300 scholarships were granted for 1982-3. More recently, the Soviet Union has become a principal source of petroleum products for Nicaragua, on what are apparently concessionary terms. Soviet economic assistance has been accompanied by further credits from other East European countries, totalling some \$70 million in 1981, and by Cuban credits and aid valued at \$150 million in 1980-2.

Although this level of economic assistance is impressive when compared to previous involvement in Central America, it is minute, for example, in comparison with the Soviet assistance to Cuba (currently running at around \$10 million a day), to Vietnam (\$3-6 million a day), and even to Ethiopia (\$1-3 million a day). The Soviet Union shows no inclination to assume the burdens associated with Nicaragua's reconstruction, and with the growing external debt problem, let alone that of the economic consolidation of the revolution. Indeed, many Soviet writers have specifically recommended caution in the socialization of the means of production in allied Third World states, and advised continued recourse to foreign private direct investment.⁵² This suggests that the comments made in Section II with regard to the significance of economic constraints in the elaboration of current Soviet policy in the Third World have specific relevance to Soviet-Nicaraguan relations. What is true of the Soviet Union itself is even truer of those satellite states dependent for their very survival on Soviet assistance (this includes Cuba and many of the Eastern European states currently granting limited assistance to Nicaragua).

Economic assistance was followed by military aid totalling \$28 million in Soviet, East German, and Cuban arms transfers in 1981-82. These included T54 and T55 tanks, armoured personnel carriers, heavy artillery, air defence missiles, and large numbers of small arms.⁵³ This assistance has permitted the expansion of the Nic-

⁵² See Mikoyan's recommendation of the 1921-8 Soviet New Economic Policy as a strategy for Nicaragua in "Ob osobennostyakh revolyutsii v Nikaragua i eyo urokakh s tochki zrenii teorii i praktiki osvoboditel'nogo dvizhenii", *Latinskaya Amerika* (1980), #3, pp. 42-43.

⁵³ The bulk of the preceding figures are taken from J. Valenta, "The Soviet Union", *op. cit.* (note 2), in Wiarda, pp. 217-8.