

People right to self-determination

To the Editor:

With "Contra Sandinista" we see, once again, the shameless insults and meddling of a superpower. Whether U.S. or Soviet social-imperialism, the superpowers see everything from their own prejudices which do not recognize the rights of any other countries. Thus we see shameless insults against the Nicaraguan people while the highest praises are lavished on the hired assassins of U.S. imperialism, the contras.

Rather than taking any genuinely democratic stand, "Contra Sandinista" discusses selected personalities from either side. Due to its pro-imperialist bias it always has good things to say about contras, while it discovers the shadiest characters only within the Sandinista ranks. At most, we might conclude that both these sides are really very similar in terms of the sort of personalities which are likely to be found within their ranks.

Both the open imperialists and the pro-Sandinista elements have been claiming that the issue is the kind of government which Nicaragua has. Therefore, a debate is taking place between those who see a "totalitarian hell" and those who see a "Swedish paradise". But the real issue is the sovereign rights of the people, including the right to determine what kind of social system they want to have. Whether capitalists or anti-imperialist revolutionaries, the Nicaraguan people must be free to decide for themselves. Both the U.S. and Soviet Union have been meddling in Nicaragua to rob them of this right.

Some have questioned "Contra Sandinista's" "facts", but one fact remains abundantly clear: nowhere in the article is there an admission that the people of Nicaragua have a basic right to self-determination, and that the American attempts to overthrow that country's legitimate government are a violation of its sovereign rights. U.S. imperialism cannot admit this because, then, the whole attempt to win public sympathy for the contras would fizzle away.

Charles Spurr

Sanger uses emotional drivel

To the Editor:

After reading the *Gazette* editor's claim that Jamie Glazov was guilty of using E-Z logic or strategic analysis it became clear that the only person guilty of using this tactic was the editor, Mr. Sanger.

Mr. Sanger's logic goes like this: if you disagree with what Mr. Glazov says then try to find some statistics that prove his arguments false. Finding that Mr. Glazov's statistics are accurate and that you don't have any to counter him with, resort to name calling and wild accusations (for example, James Glazov is twisting logic and is the next Barbara Amiel). After making these unsupported claims throw in a bunch of letters ("if B then C or J or P or Z or Q or whatever") to throw the reader off the fact that you haven't proven anything yourself.

On a more concrete note, Mr. Sanger implies that Mr. Glazov's proof of an undemocratic Sandinista regime comes "because one member of the Sandinista government was associated with the Somoza regime." Here Mr. Sanger is guilty of intentionally misleading the readers as to the extent of Mr. Glazov's evidence. Mr. Glazov points out that many of the leading members of the Sandinista government (and not just their fathers) are



former supporters of Somoza including Joaquin Cuadra, Sergio Ramirez and Francisco D'Escoto. Glazov goes on to cite examples of human rights violations committed by the Sandinista regime.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Sanger does not make any reference to the arguments of the Geoff Stone the Dal-Kings Young New Democrat who, in a response to Mr. Glazov's article, claimed "most of the countries Amnesty International sees problems with are supported by the United States. The contras are supported by the United States also. Hmmm..." First of all, Mr. Stone's contention about Amnesty International is simply not true (check their latest report) but it does serve as a classic example of E-Z logic. Mr. Sanger overlooks this, though, because it would harm his underlying contention that the Sandinista Government is democratic which he has neither the evidence nor the courage to support openly.

No, the only thing Mr. Glazov is guilty of is being too logical. It is evident that people like Mr. Sanger feel it is necessary to discredit the well documented arguments of people like Jamie Glazov with baseless emotional drivel. I expected better from the editor of our student newspaper.

Graham Flack

Leftist impotence

To the Editor:

Toby Sanger's editorial (E-Z logic) criticizing Jamie Glazov's "logic" was leftist impotence at its best. What is most interesting in this ensuing debate is how Jamie's opponents miserably fail to prove any of his facts wrong, let alone even mention them. Attacking Jamie, Geoff Stone talked of the U.N. and death squads in right wing regimes. Carlos Jauregui talked about Adolph Hitler and Jesus Christ. But Mr.

Sanger surpassed both of them in bringing up irrelevant nonsense.

To challenge Jamie's facts about the corruptness of the Sandinista regime, Mr. Sanger comes up with the brilliant argument that "it is obvious that Glazov is the true heir to Barbara Amiel in the art." Then, to back up this most serious fact, Mr. Sanger gives the readers a lesson in the English alphabet — naming off letters. Such intellectual wisdom, that is so relevant to Nicaragua, must have left poor Jamie shattered.

If Jamie should be criticized for anything, it should be for being too soft on the Sandinista regime and not mentioning some of the most important aspects related to this topic. Today there are approximately fifty-three former officers of Somoza's National Guard serving in the Sandinista forces, a list headed by General Federico Prado, whom Jamie should have mentioned. Jamie only listed four names.

Jamie is correct by pointing out that the first level of the political leadership of the contras is made up of former Sandinistas. He fails to mention, however, that the second-level includes a large number of former Trotskyists and Marxists from various Latin American countries. The contras have attracted a wide range of Left-leaning democrats who simply see in the contras the only hope to save Nicaragua. Nevertheless, Jamie succeeds in putting the myth that the contras are Somocistas where it belongs — in the trash pile.

There is no question that Jamie has won the debate on Nicaragua. Obviously, he is extremely well-read on the situation in that country and deserves credit. To Mr. Sanger, I would only suggest that the next time he attempts to get involved in the Nicaraguan controversy, that instead of rattling on about Barbara Amiel and "far left millenarian Satanistic cultists", perhaps he could write about something which has to do with that country —

maybe about Mauricio Membreno, the 18 year old president of the Nicaraguan Social Democratic Youth, who is now serving an eleven year sentence on trumped-up charges. Latest word has it from human-rights organizations that the boy can not eat because his jaw has been shattered in two places after a "questioning period" with his Sandinista interrogators.

For democracy in Nicaragua,
Howard Curry

Do not adjust your set

To the Editor:

I am still having difficulty trying to figure out just what Toby Sanger's editorial "E-Z logic" was trying to accomplish. Naturally, it was an attempt to criticize Jamie Glazov's views on Nicaragua. How he was going about the process has me confused.

Perhaps Mr. Sanger is just too smart for me, but I read the editorial several times and ended up getting more confused as I went along.

Mr. Sanger starts off with outstanding sarcasm, talking about "Jamie's sympathetic portrayal of the Sandinista gov't." If Sanger is trying to be funny then maybe he succeeded in getting several people to laugh. If he's seriously trying to prove Jamie's facts about Nicaragua wrong then he has disastrously failed. As the editorial progresses, Mr. Sanger seems to get lost in a confusing array of irrelevant remarks.

Jamie talked of the contras, the Sandinistas and other facts about Nicaragua. In attacking Jamie, Mr. Sanger enlightens us by mentioning the letters in the alphabet, Barbara Amiel, and how to adjust your TV set. Not one thing Jamie wrote was challenged.

I think it is a disgrace that the editor of a newspaper writes such nonsense. If Mr. Sanger's objective was to make a fool of himself and show his readers he knows nothing about Nicaragua, then congratulations, he has succeeded. If he wanted to prove Jamie's article, dedicated to the corruptness of the Sandinista regime, was wrong, he left much, far too much to be desired.

Sean Smith

The new Nicaragua — a symbol of liberation or a dangerous outpost of communism? Our letter writers this week can't seem to agree. With this special commentary on the war-torn country, the Gazette hopes to provide you with some special pictures and images: photos of Nicaraguans, and stories told by them through Atlantic Canadians. We don't attempt to answer all the important questions about Nicaragua; nor do we think we know all the questions. If you have doubts our revolution, say the Sandinistas, come and see for yourselves. . .

We thank all the people who contributed to this supplement:

**Lois Corbett
Stephen Shay
Toby Sanger**