

pons which will be used to fight off a U.S. intervention if necessary. Nicaragua took up arms to overthrow an unjust and repressive tyrant; they did not lay down those weapons upon achievement of their goal. Rather, they organized a standing army in the traditional sense of the modern nation state, in order to defend what they had won. I did not really expect anything different.

It becomes very difficult to know how to bring this to a close. As I said at the outset, your conclusion strikes home: my only response to violence is one of faith. I don't know what I would have done had I been in Nicaragua two years ago. I think my support of the Sandinistas would have stopped short of my carrying a gun, but I would have collaborated with them, I am sure. But that is not the real issue. The question is what am I doing in the U.S.? Are there parallels in the experience of Nicaraguan Christians which can help answer that question?

One friend in particular, a Baptist pastor who did not take up arms but who collaborated fully with the Sandinistas, shared with me the memory of the day Arlen, a young woman from his parish, left to join the Sandinistas in the mountains. She asked for a book from his library to take with her: *Fuerza de Amar* (Strength to Love) by Martin Luther King, Jr. Perhaps she reached the point which Ellul seems to say is the best we can do: acknowledge that the historical moment we are in demands of us an action which does not hold up to the ideal set for us in Christ's response to violence by turning the other cheek. Arlen must have been able to accept that tension as she pulled on her boots with King's book tucked under her arm. She was killed brutally by the National Guard, so I cannot ask her. They tell me she was the most joyful person in the mountain camps. I pray we can accept the

inevitable tensions in our lives with the joy that is promised in living with faith.

Adelante!

YK

Dear YK,

You have left me nearly speechless. As I review our verbose confessions, I cannot help but remember one of the most disarming moments during my travels in India last year. At a tea with several Indian religious leaders there arose considerable controversy about religion and ethics. After Muslims and Hindus and Christians and Sikhs had argued for a while about the true interpretations of their various faiths, the eldest in the crowd, a modest Gandhian whose appearance brought the Mahatma himself to mind, spoke words that brought the zealous religionists and their audience to a humorous, humble silence. He simply said, "Friends, let us remember that nonviolence is not talking too much."

And so, my dear friend, lest I further taint my conscience with acts of violence, I will be brief. It seems only fair to our readers to confess that we find ourselves hard put to pose as proponents of opposite points of view. We initially thought we would call this article a "dialogue between a Sandinista and a Gandhian." But the more we have talked, agonized, and laughed over the questions we address here, the more we have realized that we basically agree; those characterizations would deny the ambiguity we both bring to this discussion. Our temperaments and our experiences over the past two years are perhaps the most basic differences between us.

Our conclusions are few, our questions many. Let us hold the questions before us: With concern for personal purity aside, is not the refusal to inflict harm on another the most revolutionary approach to life? And, if we say