Politics and the Catholic church in Nicaragua

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Description/Summary
Guerrilla-priests and liberation theology are not new phenomena in Nicaragua. Ever since the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, Catholic Church leaders have played a major role in that country's politics. The result, John Kirk writes, is a polarized church, one with a progressive minority at loggerheads with the conservative hierarchy. Kirk sets each stage of the church-state debate in a historical continuum, then examines the forty-year period of Somocismo and the Sandinista period (1979-90) that followed. This social revolution - blending nationalism, Marxism, and Catholicism - dared to be different, he claims, and accordingly it paid the price. Kirk wrote this book following three trips to Nicaragua during the 1980s, when he witnessed firsthand the social polarization occurring at the time. But the involvement of the Catholic Church in Nicaraguan politics is not exceptional, he says: "Most - if not all - religions are also encumbered with socio-political concerns that go beyond the essentially 'religious.'"

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The Catholic Church in the Nicaraguan Revolution. Philip J. Williams. Pages 65-95. The Evolution of the Catholic Church in Costa Rica. Philip J. Williams. Unlike most recent studies of the Catholic Church in Latin America, Philip Williams' book sets out to analyse the Church in two very dissimilar political contexts - Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Despite the obvious differences, Williams argues that in both cases the Church has responded to social change in a remarkably similar fashion. The efforts of progressive clergy to promote change in both countries has been largely blocked in both hierarchies, fearful that such change will threaten the Church's influence in society. Based on extensive first-hand research, this book is a welcome contr The government and the Catholic Church had worked together in ensuring that all means of transport were available and a great number of populations attended the
gathering. The reform-minded Catholics in Nicaragua had some expectations from the pope. The crowd composed of several Christian revolutionaries whom their hopes about their families had been swept away. However, he encouraged the Nicaraguan priests not to have priestly involvement in politics. The people were highly disappointed with the Pope’s position on political action. They believed that by the fact that the Pope’s priests and nuns had expressed their support for the war, the pope could also support it but the he greatly criticized the Falkland War. Experts argue that in Nicaragua, the Catholic Church always represented different positions and currents. “In the 1960s, many priests who focused on the social aspects of the gospel turned to the left and to liberation theology,” says Antonio Monte, a Nicaraguan historian and postgraduate at the Free University Berlin, adding that this movement peaked in the 1980s with the victory of the Sandinista Revolution and a few of its key figures, mainly liberation theologian Ernesto. Cardenal. Read more: International condemnation of Nicaragua killings. More active role in domestic politics.