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November 25, 1986

Kate Mulroney
Secretary, Class of 1980

Dear Kate,

After seeing the article on TecNICA in the October issue of Technology Review, I was inspired to write. I went to Nicaragua in September with TecNICA to teach at the National Engineering University (UNI) in Managua and help them set up their curriculum. The curriculum needs updating to teach the students hard-core practical techniques for the new self-governing Nicaragua. As a colony of the United States for over 100 years, wealthy engineering students would study very theoretical subjects for their prestige, and either stay in the United States or return to Nicaragua with skills that were of no value at all in their own country.

It's hard to know how much you've accomplished in just a couple of weeks in the way of help. It's also hard to know how much you've really learned about a country in such a short time, as well. Some things come across pretty quickly, though: No hot water, no water at all many days, no paper products, no cans or bottles (you drink sodas out of a baggie) and damage from the 1972 earthquake still mostly unrepaired. I.e. it is a very poor country struggling to exist against all odds. The idea of the U.S., the most powerful nation on Earth, waging war against these people is nothing less than obscene. If the people of TecNICA and the thousands of other North Americans who have traveled to Nicaragua have accomplished nothing else, I hope we at least ^{have} shown a more human side of the people of the U.S. than the barbaric policies of the U.S. government.

I am currently working for a small business in Santa Barbara which is developing a commercial version of a Tunnelling Electron Microscope. And working hard to stop the U.S. war against the people of Central America.

Best wishes,

Robert Bernstein