

Arctic Radio Club member Jorma Mäntylä was in Nicaragua from August 22 till September 4 and has provided the following information:

General Structure: Contrary to Western press reports, Nicaragua is not a communist country. It is a country with a mixed economy including, however, a rather strong state sector. This is true for broadcasting too. There are altogether 44 radio stations in Nicaragua divided into three categories:

- Official state and party stations (2)
- Non-profit community oriented CORADEP stations (18)
- Private and commercial stations (24).

CORADEP (Corporacion de Radiodifusion del Pueblo): This organisation is not well known abroad. CORADEP is a network of 18 radio stations each with individual programming. These are stations that were nationalised by the Sandinista government, having formerly been owned by the deposed dictator Anastasio Somoza and his family. The Sandinistas promised to nationalise his property even before the revolution. Now these 18 stations are the basis of community radio network which tries to introduce participatory and democratic radio.

Lack of Spares: Some of the stations listed in the WRTH, for instance, were not on the air during Jorma's visit. The main reason is not the Sandinista government but the US trade embargo. Most Nicaraguan radio stations use old American transmitters and studio equipment which need frequent maintenance. Due to the embargo spares cannot be openly bought and are therefore smuggled through more friendly countries such as Mexico and Costa Rica. All this takes time and stations are often silent for weeks at a time. Commercial as well as state and community stations are suffering.

Station Round-up based on daytime monitoring in Managua.

- 540* R Corporacion; commercial station with ads for right-wing parties. ID "Corporacion".
- 555* R 19 de Julio, Chinandega; CORADEP station.
- 600 R Insurreccion, Matagalpa; CORADEP station.
- 620* La Voz de Nicaragua; Not // 6100 SW; Government station; usual ID as "La Voz".
- 640 LV de Nicaragua, mysterious second channel. Sometimes used as proper second channel also as emergency frequency during tropical storms eg Aug 31st.
- 650* R Xalteva, Granada; CORADEP station.
- 680* R La Primerisima; CORADEP station; sounds like key station in network.
- 700 R El Fabuloso 7; commercial station, heard intermittently with technical problems.
- 720 R Catolica de Nicaragua; sometimes not very religious, more commercial; distorted signal.
- 750* R Sandino; official FLSN station; 24hrs; slogans "Audio de la Revolucion" and "Poder de la Audio".
- 780* LV de Nicaragua; in // 620.
- 820* Ondas del Luz; very religious station; slogan "Reflexion de pueblo cristiana Nicaraguense"; rel music and prayers.
- 840 R Noticias; commercial station; news format but some music.
- 880* R Paz; CORADEP station; slogan "Esta es R Paz, Corporacion de Radiodifusion de Pueblo, Managua, Nicaragua Libre!"
- 900* R Tiempo; commercial station; slogan "Una senal humana".
- 920* R Mundial; commercial station; slogan "La numero uno en todo".
- 960 R 13 de Octubre, Rio San Juan; CORADEP station.
- 1030 R Masaya, Masaya; commercial station.
- 1060* R La Cachorra; CORADEP station; rock music.
- 1090* R Zinica, Bluefields; CORADEP station; //6120; some English programming; SS ID as "Zinica".
- 1130 R Reloj; commercial station; very poor audio and breaks in transmission; ID "Sistema R Reloj".
- 1170* R Dario, Leon; commercial and Christian format.
- 1260 R Guecuence; private cultural station; classical mx & poetry.
- 1270 R Ateneas, Leon; commercial station.
- 1300 Canal 1300 AM; commercial station with lots of Mexican music; equipment problems and amateur programming style.
- 1360 R La Primerisima; weak second harmonic 2x680kHz.
- 1370 R Patria, Boaco; religious talk and music.
- 1410* R Venceremos, Leon; CORADEP station but heard with some ads!
- 1430* R Liberacion, Esteli; CORADEP station; transmitter problems.
- 1500* R Minuto; commercial station; many ads; ID as "La Minuto".

Notes:

- 1) no sign of R La Cachorra 10kW on 1000kHz.
- 2) report includes no mention of anti-Sandinista R Liberacion on 1520kHz. (is it still operational?)
- 3) many stations operate only limited hours (small stations were mainly daytimers) Stations with extended schedules are marked with an asterisk *.
- 4) The receiver used did not have a digital readout so frequency accuracy is difficult to assess.
- 5) The remaining CORADEP stations not heard by Jorma are: R Mines, Siuna; R La Voz Popular, Pto Cabezas; R Nueva Guinea; R Frente Sur, Rivas; R Revolucion, Chontales; R Libertad, Carazo; R Segovia, Nueva Segovia; and R Pancasan, Jinotega.

(Thanks to Jorma and ARC)

Footnote:

In a recent (Aug 1988) issue of *Popular Communications* there was an interesting report on R Liberacion and the source of its programming; one of the mysteries surrounding this station. It was claimed by a "very reliable anonymous source" that the audio feed for R Liberacion's SW service (not normally in // with MW) is carried by the Satcom F4 satellite (transponder #4) and originates in Lynchburg, VA in the USA. It is claimed that the programming arrives via an unidentified telephone cable at the headquarters of Jerry Falwell's Liberty Baptist Network before being beamed up to the satellite with the regular TV programming. If this so where does the MW programming come from?