

## The CIA operation against Nicaragua using USAID

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**The Nicaraguan judiciary's investigation of Cristiana Chamorro has predictably sparked a reaction of unease from the United States and its allies, who denounce the judiciary's investigation as a "political operation aimed at eliminating her candidacy from next November's elections". That Daniel Ortega may fear her candidacy looks like hyperbole. On the contrary, to think that the judiciary should stop the process just because she is a self-appointed candidate would be politicization of justice and, of course, an admission that the Nicaraguan state must limit its sovereignty on behalf of some of its citizens.**

The uproar in the OAS, the United States and the European Union clashes with their shameful silence in the cases of Rafael Correa in Ecuador, Ignacio Lula da Silva in Brazil, or Cristina Kirchner in Argentina, where most of the empire's backyard applauded the judicial fabrications (that indeed took place in those cases) preventing Left candidacies in all of Latin America. But as we know, decency has no home in Washington or Brussels. The fact that the United States, the OAS and the EU are now concerned about the candidacies of their employees in Nicaragua, while they keep quiet about the massacre Ivan Duque's narco-government is perpetrating in Colombia, speaks volumes of their courage and their legal and political neutrality.

If Comandante Ortega really wanted to bury the hopes of the oligarchy and the United States he would have acted as they seem to want, namely, by going to the polls and defeating the opposition hands down, as all the opinion polls indicate. But that would have meant closing his eyes to the

obvious violations of the law and thus indirectly accepting them and ignoring the country's Constitution, laws and current norms. From the point of view of political advantage Ortega would have had everything to win, in short, avoiding controversy and letting the opposition tear itself apart internally, with everyone snapping at each other, highlighting how they are a bunch of corrupt operators, financed from abroad, and certainly no solution for the country.

President Ortega could also have done so by agreeing to bring forward the elections in 2018-2019, when popular horror at the nihilistic coup attempt had reached its peak. Winning would have been a piece of cake for Ortega. But there is the more important question of respect for the country's institutions and the rules of its democratic system, which Washington and Brussels insist on ignoring, perhaps thinking Nicaraguan democracy, paid for with the blood of many Sandinistas, is some merchandise to be traded in a game of political tactics.

### **The sinister Chamorro scam**

The Chamorro affair involves issues of subversion and money laundering involving the non profit Violeta Barrios Chamorro Foundation, of which Cristiana is president and legal representative. This prominent figure of her Nicaraguan oligarch family is now under house arrest. The reason? Her refusal to answer the questions of the Public Prosecutor's Office about the movement of money in her bank accounts under the name of the Foundation. When questioned about the movement of funds buried in financial reports to the country's regulatory and tax authorities, señora Chamorro effectively said that "since the US State Department does not believe CIA funds provided via USAID can be defined as illicit, there is no reason to answer the questions from Nicaraguan investigators".

It is difficult to find a similarly embarrassing answer in the history of jurisprudence, either in the investigative or trial stages. Nor is it a

coincidence that, instead of rendering accounts, the Chamorro family shut down the Violeta Chamorro Foundation, FUNIDES and CINCO, the three intermediaries for illicit money destined for subversive activities, following the approval of the Foreign Agents Law which permits receiving money from abroad, but obliges the recipients, whether individuals or companies, to report the transactions to the authorities.

In recent years, 76 million dollars from USAID have passed through the accounts of the foundation of which Chamorro is president. These are U.S. government funds earmarked for two purposes: the formation of a subversive political opposition and the construction of a media system supporting its rationale and objectives. As documented by U.S. journalist Ben Norton in an investigation [published on The Grayzone](#) website, the tens of millions of dollars allocated by USAID and its partners had a clear objective: the overthrow of the legitimately elected Sandinista government, of the president, Comandante Daniel Ortega, and his family.

Chamorro is accused of money laundering because she received and distributed government money from a foreign power to destabilize Nicaragua. Behavior which, in all countries of the world, is regarded as a conspiracy against the established order, collusion with the enemy, illicit association and subversion, not to mention the criminal offense of failing to report to the relevant authorities financial transactions with foreign countries. That is why she is accused as president of the non profit foundation which, together with FUNIDES and CINCO, managed in Nicaragua the US government funding the CIA was channeling to the opposition. The three non profit foundations were the destinations all the dollars were addressed to because all three involved the Chamorros: Cristiana, her brother Carlos Fernando and her cousin Juan Sebastian.

In short, the whole system revolved around this family of oligarchs and and the US Embassy, for which the Chamorros are on hand to serve in

all kinds of ways. The network of media outlets accompanying the construction of the fifth column in Nicaragua has available newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations, websites and local offices of international news agencies, in addition to numerous accounts in all the different social media. Journalists and newspapers, paid by the CIA and run by the Chamorros, have specialized in recent years in fomenting grossly false media offensives aimed at discrediting the government and stoking anti-Sandinista hatred for use later in the failed coup attempt. These are the same media outlets now breathlessly hanging on Chamorro's every outrageous comment. Nicaragua's misnamed "independent media" has not even a sniff of independence.

So it is far from clear why the Nicaraguan judiciary should have turned a blind eye to the actions of Cristiana Chamorro, unless it might want to argue that the mere announcement of her entry into politics imparts to her immunity rendering moot all past and present criminal accusations. Hence it is strange that in the United States, where several presidential candidates have renounced their candidacies merely for failing to pay divorce maintenance, the authorities insist on the principle that lying or flouting law is incompatible with being a candidate for public office. Why is American severity a sign of democracy and Nicaraguan severity a sign of dictatorship?

Nicaragua is not a protectorate of the United States, as the Chamorros would like it to be. Like every country in the world, Nicaragua has its own constitutional order and a jurisprudence laid out in its own Criminal and Civil Codes. Likewise, just as it has norms that regulate private activity, it also sets out the rights, duties and requirements for all those who are called to public office. For this purpose, the law establishes mandatory rules and requirements, as in the rest of the world. In Nicaragua, as in any other country, all citizens are called on to respect the country's laws regardless of their opinions and political ambitions. The objectivity of the law is, after all, the main instrument for guaranteeing substantive equality. Or is something like the Somali-

Libyan model, based on feudalism to be preferred?

## The role of USAID

For several years now, the U.S. government has discovered that internal subversion is a good bet in countries considered hostile. The balance sheets of many public institutions and private non profit foundations in the United States show figures and investment flows destined to run in parallel with White House diplomacy. They are sold to public opinion as humanitarian aid, but they are among the weapons of choice for the US to meddle in other countries internal affairs.

USAID, NED, Freedom House, IRI, NDI, are the US agencies that provide most of the funds destined to destabilize "disobedient" countries. European NGOs also operate in support, Spain's in particular, but not only those of Spain. These agencies generate and fund subversive activity so as to create a climate of ungovernability, based on hatred and violence (disguised as projects to "promote democracy"), which serve to reduce consensus favoring the government. The money is delivered to anti-government organizations as payment for declaring themselves as such. And the deal works very well: the more activity these organizations demonstrate, the greater will be the percentage of the sums they get paid. Newspapers, NGOs, political parties and labor unions are financed (and often built from scratch) with the aim of conspiring to increase political conflict in the country whose government is to be overthrown.

In a 1991 interview with the New York Times, Allen Weinstein, one of the founders of the NED, said, "What the NED does today is what the CIA used to do clandestinely for twenty-five years". While Marc Plattner, NED vice president, explained the organization's role as follows: "Liberal democracies clearly favor economic arrangements that encourage globalization, and the international order that supports globalization is based on U.S. military dominance."

## **Criminals disguised as Boy Scouts**

USAID, like NED, are the publicly presentable arm of the CIA. What Ben Norton's investigation brings to light - as other international journalists have already denounced - is the CIA's role in building the subversive opposition to the Sandinista government that began immediately after it took office in January 2007 and culminated in the 2018 coup attempt.

The use of U.S. funds for the destabilization of Nicaragua can be traced in each and every terrorist action carried out during the 2018 coup attempt. Just as already a year into the 1979 revolution the CIA began training the Contras to try to overthrow the Sandinista government, in the same way since the beginning of the second stage of the Revolution, inaugurated with the electoral victory of November 2006, the CIA has initiated subversive plans to overthrow by force the result of the popular vote. The difference is that then the European Left was indignant with the United States, while today, having forgotten its principles so as to accommodate itself to the knees of the empire, it is indignant with the Sandinistas.

The CIA operation using USAID foresees precise steps: training in political and civic disobedience; "warming up" the streets, that is to say, repeated episodes of violence against institutions and political enemies; chaos and violence to plunge the country into fear and to create chaos. At the same time, all affiliated information outlets inside and outside the country are activated, as well as any international institution that may pronounce itself in support of the coup, obviously transformed into a "struggle for freedom" of "peaceful students".

Right? Little does it matter that the truth is not in the facts but in the narrative provided by mainstream media. That is, the truth is no longer reality but rather whatever in the imaginary narrative representing it. Clearly, press and media freedom get turned into an arbitrary license for

whoever controls what gets published.

To close the circle, the United States takes direct action: international sanctions, embargoes and direct military threats are applied; scorecards are drawn up measuring compliance with the standards demanded by Washington and the order goes out to all allied countries to fall in line. Any country attacked by the United States must become a target for all its allies. Between domestic terrorism, media campaigns, diplomatic offensives and sanctions, any country targeted by the U.S. is surrounded and has little chance to resist. Unless resistance has become a habit accustomed to prevail and enemy hostility an accustomed, annoying nuisance.

### **The flawed algorithm of the coup**

U.S. foreign policy moves have their Achilles' heel in the mechanical application of an identical recipe for subversion, regardless of the context. In Nicaragua it could not succeed, one only has to read history and current political events to realize that. In fact, to think that conditions from other contexts could have been made to work indicates an absolute ignorance of Nicaragua, of its military structure, of its political order, of the ethical dimension of Sandinismo and of the absolute trust and obedience of the FSLN towards its leader, Comandante Ortega.

US planners should have understood how there was no place for the terrorist adventure of 2018, how it was inconceivable to defeat Sandinismo by force. Fifteen years of modernization in the country, of restoring rights to its people, of economic and social growth, of restoring national identity and pride in a country that had been vilified and destroyed by neoliberalism, these are an extraordinary safety belt for Sandinismo.

Attacked in the streets, the FSLN has defended the solidity of

Nicaragua's political framework with efficiency and tactical wisdom; it has known how to restrain thoughts of revenge and transform them into an increase of popular support; it has defended its Nicaraguan project with the strength it needed to do so, far more than its enemies imagined it had, but much less than they could have used. Neither Cristiana Chamorro nor anyone else can disturb this: after 42 years of government, opposition and return to government, Sandinismo has proven able to meet any challenge, capable of adapting to any circumstances, ready for every eventuality. Except surrender.