

# Attacks on Nicaragua and the role of the United States



President William  
Howard Taft 1909-13



Which US president said  
this?

**In Nicaragua, we will:**

“no longer tolerate a... despot”

“no longer appease dictators”

**Nicaragua faces a**

“reign of terror”

“serious human rights abuses”

**Nicaragua’s government is:**

a “brutal and oppressive” regime

“the cause of immense human  
suffering”

President Trump 2016-20



# A century of US interventions in Nicaragua

1909 – overthrow of President Zelaya

1909-33 – US occupation; ended by Augusto César Sandino

1934 – Sandino assassinated

1936-79 – Somoza dictatorship

1979 – Sandinista revolution

1980-90 – US-sponsored Contra war

2007 – Sandinistas return to power

2010 onwards – US strategy to undermine Sandinista government



# Types of US intervention – 1980s and 2010 onwards

	1980s	2010
Direct military attacks (mining of ports)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proxy war	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provoke internal violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Economic sanctions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sanctions against individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manipulate international bodies (UN, OEA, etc)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manipulate human rights reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fund local NGO 'pro-democracy' activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Take advantage of natural disasters (Covid, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Manipulate international media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social media campaigns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Split the left	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trade embargoes...?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Illegal US sanctions

- NICA Act – blocks aid and loans via international institutions
- Sanctions – against individuals and corporate bodies
  - Sonia Castro – former health minister
  - Ramon Avellan – head of the Masaya police



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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2020 No. 279**

**OVERSEAS TERRITORIES**

The Nicaragua (Sanctions) (Overseas Territories) Order 2020

*Made* - - - -

*11th March 2020*

*Laid before Parliament*

*18th March 2020*

US AID strategy to undermine  
Sandinista government 2010-2020  
\$96 million to projects with  
political parties, NGOs and

At least \$170 million to finance  
political parties, NGOs and opposition  
media





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# Laying the groundwork for insurrection: A closer look at the U.S. role in Nicaragua's social unrest

By Benjamin Waddell / May 1, 2018

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## Organization Considered to receive USAID Fund

### INTRODUCTION

U.S. FY 2020 - 2021 foreign assistance includes fund to support the restoration of democracy and human rights in the region, with special focus on Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.



ORGANIZATION	OBJETIVE	NAME	TOTAL FUND	DATE
Fundación Fénix	Resiliencia comunitaria	Fénix	U\$ 499,560.00	2020-2021
Asociación Aldea Global	Incentivo para la Democracia	Aldea Global	U\$ 475,122.00	2021
Asociación Centro Jurídico Popular	Agentes de auditorías Social y fiscalización política	CJP	U\$ 400,175.00	2020-2021
Fundación para la Autonomía y el Desarrollo de la Costa Atlántica de Nicaragua	Programa Educación Para el Éxito	FADCANIC	U\$ 457,759.00	2020-2021

Latest examples of US AID funding

\$13m for 2020/21



# Where did the new money go?

- \$3,875,000 to the Chamorro family – one of most powerful in Nicaragua
- Jaime Chamorro Cardenal - owner of *La Prensa*
- Carlos Fernando Chamorro – owner of *Confidencial*
- Juan Sebastian Chamorro – likely presidential candidate - his NGO FUNIDES spread wildly exaggerated forecasts of the effects of Covid



# Where did the new money go?

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**Movimiento Campesino -  
\$438,132**

Responsible for the roadblocks in  
central and eastern Nicaragua  
April-July 2018

Responsible for attacks on police  
stations including Morrito, July 12  
2018 – four dead, nine kidnapped  
and beaten

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# Where did the new money go?

Nicaraguan Association for Human Rights

Headed by Alvaro Leiva

Received \$701,032

Seen here after the kidnap, torture and burning to death of police officer Gabriel de Jesús Vado Ruiz in July 2018 – trying to cover up the evidence



# Where is the money going now?



## **'RAIN' - Responsive Assistance in Nicaragua – March 2020**

Create “the environment for Nicaragua’s transition to democracy”

Work goes ahead “regardless of the result of the 2021 election, even in the event of the Sandinistas ‘winning fairly.’”

Total cost unknown but includes \$504,000 in grants to be made to NGOs

# Protests against the government in April-July 2018

- Orchestrated by opposition groups financed by the US
- Began as protests against Indio Maiz fire
- Then against social security changes - quickly turned to demands for regime change
- Deaths of police, government supporters, bystanders and protesters
- Kidnapping, torture and 'disappearances'
- Burning down of public buildings; ransacking of businesses
- Burning of media offices such as Radio Ya
- Threats and attacks against Sandinistas
- Blocking the streets and major highways
- All blamed by local and international media and human rights groups on government supporters





Lucia Pineda

Reporter for 100% Noticias who deliberately reported that it was Sandinistas who burned down the Granada town hall, when it was opposition vandals who travelled from Masaya to attack it



Miguel Mora

Head of 100% Noticias, issued false reports that their studio was under attack on May 28 2018, calling for retaliation against Radio Ya which was burned down endangering all the staff inside

Advocates of 'peaceful' protest celebrated by the US government

Essential reading!

Downloadable at [www.nscag.org](http://www.nscag.org)

