

The CIA Attempts Coups in Nicaragua with Tax Dollars Through US Agencies and Corporate Foundations: USAID Does Not Provide Aid - It Carries Out Coups

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Global Research, June 16, 2021

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean, USA](#)
Theme: [Intelligence, US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Since the Sandinistas won the 2006 election their anti-poverty policies have had enormous success.

The country is 90% self-sufficient in food. 99% of the population have electricity in their homes that is now generated with 70+% green energy; International financial Institutions including the World Bank, the International Development Bank and The Central American Bank for Economic Integration praise Nicaragua for its excellent, efficient project execution. It has one of the best health systems in Latin America praised by the International Monetary Fund, with 20 new state of the art hospitals since 2007 achieving one of the lowest Covid mortality rates in the world. Poverty, extreme poverty, maternal, child and infant mortality have all been cut at least in half. Nicaragua is number one in the world in both women in politics and women in ministerial positions and it is fifth in gender equity behind the Nordic nations.

Many more advances for the majority of the population in education, housing and infrastructure have resulted in huge wins for the FSLN in the last two elections (2011 and 2016) and polls indicate that in the Nov. 7 presidential elections they will garner at least 60% of the vote with at least 70% voter turn-out. Some 95% of the adult population have identity cards needed for voting. If the US public knew what this nation, impoverished by nearly 200 years of US war and aggression, has been able to achieve in fourteen years it would surely encourage them to demand better education, infrastructure and universal health care in the United States.

To prevent similar acts of sovereignty by small nations still considered colonies by the United States, the CIA prepared the way for the 2018 coup attempt and has never stopped trying to overthrow the Sandinista government since. The CIA uses US agents, many who pass themselves off as journalists or activists, as well as those eternally stationed at the US embassy; it has provided millions of dollars to hundreds of Nicaraguans acting as foreign agents as well as their nonprofit organizations that conspire against the Sandinista

government like those recently arrested for money laundering, fraud and requesting foreign intervention.

The US helped grow the pro-US anti-Sandinista media in Nicaragua

Much of the US-directed propaganda apparatus was designed and funded by the US after the FSLN won the 2006 elections ending 17 years of three US-directed governments. A subversive front of newspapers, magazines, television stations, radio stations, websites, news agencies, and social media pages was formed. Journalists and media outlets were paid by the US (millions through the USAID, NED, IRI and US foundations) and much of it was administered by the Chamorro family media cartel, specializing in fake media campaigns to try to promote anti-Sandinista hatred and mistrust of the government.

Part of this has been known for some time. For example, in May, 2018 during the coup, Tom Ricker of the Quixote Institute [described](#) 55 NED grants awarded between 2014 and 2017 for US\$4.2 million “as part of a U.S. government-funded campaign to provide a coordinated strategy and media voice for opposition groups in Nicaragua. NED grants fund media (radio, social media and other web-based news outlets) and opposition research. In addition, strategies targeting youth get substantial funding, along with programs seeking to mobilize women’s and indigenous organizations. Though the language is of support for “civil society” and “pro-democracy” groups, the focus on funding is specifically to build coordinated opposition to the government.”

US propaganda funds for 2018 coup channeled through Chamorro family media dynasty

On June 2, Journalist William Grigsby on his news analysis program, Sin Fronteras, [revealed](#) (see below) US documents which show that the CIA openly channeled US\$16.7 million for the coup attempt, between February 2017 and July 2018, through the Violeta Barrios de Chamorro Foundation whose director Cristiana Chamorro is part of a famous family of oligarchs that count eight members as previous presidents; she is also the daughter of former president Violeta Barrios de Chamorro. She and her uncle are owners of the only daily, La Prensa, funded by the US for pro-Contra lies since the 1980s. Her brother Carlos Fernando has his own media dynasty. US funds to the VBCHF support these family businesses. Her now-deceased husband, Antonio Lacayo is widely considered to have exercised great power during her mother’s presidency from 1990 to 1997 overseeing some 7 billion dollars in privatization of state property, as well as privatization of education and health care. During the early 90s you couldn’t get so much as an aspirin at a government hospital without paying for it.



Chamorro Family, 1990s, Cristiana is second from the right, Antonio Lacayo on far right, laprensa.com.ni

The US\$16.7 million was given by US agencies and foundations specifically to finance media terrorism [lies, fake news and distortion to foment assassinations and hate, destabilize and create chaos] to incite and maintain the coup attempt. The Chamorro Foundation also received €679,530 from European government-financed organizations during this period. The attempted coup left more than 200 families in mourning, thousands of people traumatized as well as much destruction and severe damage to the economy resulting in the loss of at least 130,000 jobs.

The Foundation's Director, Cristiana Chamorro, was accused by the Public Prosecutor's Office of money laundering, and given house arrest on June 2, 2021. She closed the Foundation in February of this year saying she didn't want to comply with the "Foreign Agents" law passed in October 2020, similar to but not as strict as the 1938 US Foreign Agents Act. Under the Nicaraguan law, organizations receiving foreign funding must report that funding and how it is used - thousands of nonprofits are doing this with no problem.

According to Grigsby and Liberal Party news analyst, Enrique Quiñones, there was still at least US\$7 million in the Foundation account when she closed it and this money appeared soon afterward in three of her personal banks accounts.

The US\$16.7 million given by the CIA during that short time-span was just the money given for fake news - to fund every kind of news media, programs, social media and to directly fund individuals. Many millions more were provided to other nonprofits and "Human Rights" organizations. It is telling that in a country of 6.3 million people there are four human rights organizations - all funded by the US government and one was even [founded by the US government](#) in the 80s to cover up for the Contra.

Within that US\$16.7 million, US\$9,409,853 was provided by USAID for individuals, projects and media. The National Endowment for Democracy gave the Foundation US\$564,134 for a project "promoting independent journalism and freedom of expression" in November 2017.

Fondos entregados por instancias estadounidenses y europeas a la Fundación Violeta Barrios de Chamorro 2017-2018

N°	Procedencia	Fecha de desembolso	Proyecto	Monto
1	USAID	23-02-17	Voces para Todos	4,740,000
2	USAID	02-05-17	Voces Vitales Nicaragua	2,071,639
3	USAID	17-07-17	Mujer, Voz Vital para el País	1,750,000
4	NED	11-11-17	Promoviendo el Periodismo independiente y la Libertad de Expresión en Nicaragua	564,134
5	Fundación SOROS	09-03-18	Periodismo Independiente y Transparencia	6,148,325
6	USAID	23-05-18	Creación de plataformas	643,214
7	USAID	16-07-18	Fortalecimiento de medios independientes	105,000
8	USAID	04-08-18	Movimiento Puente	100,000
	Open Society	26-07-18	Periodismo Independiente y Ciudadanía en Nicaragua	574,000
Total				14,646,312
Instancias Europeas				
	OXFAM - INTERMON	18-03-18	Fortalecer Medios de Comunicación	€ 121,000
	EIRENE BMZ	21-05-18	Promoción de una Cultura de Paz	€ 348,000
	HIVOS	09-06-18	Defensa de la Libertad de Expresión	€ 210,530
Total				€ 679,530

Medios de comunicación beneficiados			
1	La Prensa	8	100% Noticias
2	Radio Dario	9	Onda Local
3	Radio Corporación	10	Radio Universidad
4	Invermedia	11	Promedia
5	Confidencial	12	Programa Café con Voz
6	Esta Semana	13	Artículo 66
7	Periodistas independientes	14	Radio La Costeñísima

US Financing of Propaganda for Coup Attempt

The Soros Foundations - owned by New York-based tycoon George Soros - also financed fake news in Nicaragua through several of his organizations that are known to fund destabilization efforts around the world: US\$6,722,325 was given by two of the Soros Foundations: US\$6,148,325 by the Soros Foundation for the project, "independent and transparent journalism" given in March 2018 a month before the coup began, and \$574,000 in July 2018, the month the coup was defeated, by the Open Society Foundation for the "independent journalism and citizenship" project.

The 2017-2018 funding of opposition media and journalists through the Chamorro Foundation by USAID, NED and Soros Foundations - US\$16,696,312 million provided just before and during the attempted coup is a small part of funding provided by agencies like USAID, NED, IRI, Freedom House and foundations, like those of Soros with close ties to the Council on Foreign Relations.

USAID spent US\$160 million on agents and agent organizations to try to topple

the Sandinistas

The US began major [destabilization attempts](#) after the Sandinistas won the 2006 elections.

The bigger picture on USAID financing for destabilization in recent years is that it gave US\$160 million to opposition organizations and individuals between 2015 and early 2021, information still available by year on the internet; however much information about recipient organizations has been removed. Most information about NED money and the recipients has also been removed.

Official [US documents](#) presented by Grigsby in July 2020 provide more detailed evidence of which nonprofits and individuals benefitted from US\$30 million right before the 2018 coup.

Breaking the Yankee Propaganda Apparatus

The USAID says [this](#) about their role in Nicaragua, “USAID/OTI partnered with independent media to operate and produce more targeted digital content during the political crisis. The program enabled independent media to preserve and promote democratic discourse, absent further economic destabilization or dramatic state intervention.”

In a recent [article](#) Rita Jill Clark-Gollub writes:

“Anyone who has been watching Nicaragua knows that these supposedly “independent” media in Nicaragua have been the main source of Nicaragua news reported here in the United States. In other words, in my country most people get information about Nicaragua from the CIA!”

New laws passed in 2020 (a Foreign Agents Law and a law against terrorism, coups and inciting foreign intervention, which the US is screaming about even though they are less punitive than those of the US and Europe), and the recent arrests of US Foreign Agents are actions to try to limit US intervention and prevent coup attempts. The US will still get money to their agents, but it won't be nearly as easy as before and this will limit their ability to carry out the kind of terrorist actions they did in 2018.

William Grigsby on June 2 [described](#) what is happening right now in Nicaragua: “[We are] breaking the heart of the Yankee propaganda apparatus in Nicaragua, which was their main way of intervening, now, for the elections - influencing public opinion with lies, instilling fear, instilling hatred in order to try to defeat the Sandinistas. This whole operation that is being carried out from the prosecutor's office as a spearhead is just that, to destroy the propaganda apparatus of US imperialism.” He asked what all the journalist agents in Nicaragua will do without the salaries they were getting. “Are they committed enough to actually do independent journalism?”

RAIN: the CIA destabilization plan in progress now

Nevertheless, Uncle Sam will still continue efforts to destabilize the country. US ambassador Sullivan is constantly seen meeting with the agents, even denounced by President Daniel Ortega:

“This goes for the Yankee ambassador (U.S.) and other ambassadors; they like to meddle everywhere and want to make decisions for us; the Yankee ambassador (Sullivan) parades his candidates, promoting them as if he were Nicaraguan.”

In August 2020 William Grigsby received a USAID document leaked from the embassy. It details in couched terms US destabilization plans for “transition” in Nicaragua and even the contracting of a US company to head it all up. They call it [RAIN - Responsive Action in Nicaragua](#). The document has since been deleted, but not before it was [archived](#). RAIN is a blatant plan for destabilization and overthrow of the democratically elected government of Nicaragua. It is likely that much of what the US has financed in the last year is part of the RAIN plan.

The USAID document [establishes three scenarios](#) that they call “democratic transition in Nicaragua:”

“RAIN will pursue these activities against a variety of scenarios generally falling under three categories: 1. Free, fair and transparent elections lead to an orderly transition [the US candidate wins] 2. A sudden political transition occurs following a crisis [a coup leads to a US backed government] 3. Transition does not happen in an orderly and timely manner. The regime remains resilient in the face of domestic and international pressure. It is also possible that the regime may remain in power following electoral reforms and a fair election, but without changes to the rule of law or democratic governance [i.e. without changes that benefit US corporations].”

It is clear from the RAIN document that the U.S. government realizes that the Sandinistas will win the 2021 election by a large margin: that is another reason they have provided millions to agents, organizations and fake news media, hoping that they can put a dent in the 60% Sandinista win predicted in the polls, or to dis or undermine the elections altogether.

The long-time US agents under investigation for very serious crimes are not leaders: there has not been even one small protest since the arrests began June 2 because those arrested have no “pueblo.” People know that the US funded the very violent coup attempt through them - and hold them accountable. The foreign media tout them as presidential candidates, which they are not. When some of them saw that they might be arrested they ran to try to inscribe with the CXL (Citizens for Freedom) party as pre-candidates thinking this might protect them from detention. They all had the opportunity to form new political parties, but they didn’t even try because they don’t have enough members to fulfill minimal requirements. And more importantly, 19 legitimate parties are participating in the November 7 elections that don’t receive foreign funding.

And while the United States wastes millions of tax-payer dollars destabilizing the country, Nicaragua effectively and efficiently makes social and economic advances lauded by international organizations and banks, like universal health care, education, affordable housing, social infrastructure, gender equity, conversion to green energy, natural disaster and climate change mitigation, free recreation, and job creation with the creative and popular economy. The majority of the safest population in Central America with the lowest Covid mortality rate, who are healthier, better educated and housed, with electricity and potable water, whose food is locally grown and available at a decent price, with parks, fairs, pools and sports stadiums to enjoy their free time, are unlikely to let Uncle Sam influence their vote in November.

Nan McCurdy is a United Methodist missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries.

She and her missionary husband, Miguel Mairena, begin service with Give Ye Them to Eat in Puebla, Mexico.

Nan served the people of Nicaragua from 1985 to 2014. She and Miguel worked for 20 years with women and youth through the Women and Community Association in San Francisco Libre.

During the war in Nicaragua in the 1980s, Nan and her late husband, Philip Mitchell, worked in a pastoral ministry of accompaniment with people in the war zone. After the war, she assisted in the creation of the Foundation for Nicaraguan War Victims.

Nan holds degrees in biology, ecology, and pharmacy, and has done extensive non-degree studies in gender in the fields of development and community development. Nan and Miguel are members of the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference.

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