

Chapter 1 : Nicaragua | Democracy Now!

The revolution and democracy Two achievements, then - but also two figures who darken Nicaragua's democratic perspective: Daniel Ortega, Sandinista caudillo, and Arnaldo Alemán, liberal caudillo.

The Crisis of Democracy in Nicaragua How did recent protests over social security cuts in Nicaragua turn into a nationwide grassroots mobilization against President Daniel Ortega? The protests have shocked the world and shaken Nicaraguan politics to its core. The unfolding crisis has taken many, including the government, by surprise. Yet the conditions for this uprising have been in the making for more than a decade and reveal a deepening crisis of legitimacy for the Ortega administration. The state shut down multiple television stations broadcasting live coverage and ordered anti-riot police forces to disperse the demonstrations, firing live rounds into crowds of protestors while ordering the mass arrests of student activists and attacking universities in Managua. Pro-Sandinista gangs, known as turbas, and members of the Sandinista Youth also attacked demonstrators with mortars and other arms; there are reports of turbas assaulting protestors as the police stood by and failed to intervene. By the end of the first week of protests, the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights CENIDH had confirmed 43 deaths, two people in critical condition, and hundreds more wounded; other groups, relying on official and unofficial reports, estimate approximately 60 deaths. Among the dead was a journalist, Angel Gahona, who was shot and killed while live streaming coverage of protests in the Caribbean coastal city of Bluefields on Facebook. The Nicaraguan Red Cross reported that it assisted people, of whom had to be hospitalized. On April 19, Vice President Rosario Murillo spoke about the protests during her daily midday address to the nation. In his speech, he claimed that the protests had been infiltrated and were being manipulated by narco-traffickers, gang members, and delinquentes covertly equipped, financed and directed by conservative political elements in collusion with the radical Right in the United States. Protestors observed that Ortega never mentioned the protestors that had been killed or addressed ongoing allegations of police abuse. On April 22, Pope Francis, speaking during his Sunday address to thousands of the faithful gathered in St. These are not the first protests that Ortega has faced while in office. In , a coalition of environmentalists, human rights organizations, black and indigenous activists, and mestizo campesino activists mobilized to protest the passage of Law , which granted a concession to the Chinese corporation Hong Kong Nicaragua Canal Development Company HKND Group to build an interoceanic canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific to rival the one in Panama. But the recent INSS protests, which have become known as the 19th of April Movement, mark the first time that so many different sectors of Nicaraguan civil society have united to oppose him. On April 22, in response to mounting public pressure, Ortega announced in a televised speech surrounded by representatives of the business community that the government had rescinded the reforms. He called for peace, stating: We cannot allow chaos, crime and looting to prevail—and we will act under the rule of law and under the Constitution to ensure and guarantee the restoration of stability and social peace so that workers can peacefully go to work. The trees in total have been a pet project of Murillo in her rebranding of the FSLN as a party of love, reconciliation, Christian charity, and solidarity. The public assault on these critical symbols of the Ortega-Murillo administration reveal that the protests have expanded far beyond anger over the austerity reforms and have given way to a much deeper set of political demands. But they were doing so many things before—stealing elections, stealing government money, so much corruption. He served on the nine-member National Directorate that governed Nicaragua during the transition from the Somoza dictatorship to the revolutionary government. He was elected president in , which he held until the Sandinistas lost the presidential elections in to the United National Opposition, a coalition of right-wing parties. Ortega thus became the first Nicaraguan president in history to peacefully cede power to an opposition party. Over the next 16 years Ortega would transform himself from a revolutionary to a political strongman who wielded decisive political influence in both the FSLN party and in national politics. The Ortega administration currently controls all four branches of government, the military, and the national police force, and has effectively transformed Nicaragua into a one-party state. The recent protests have prompted comparisons to the Sandinista Revolution. For more than 40 years, the Somoza family ruled Nicaragua with an iron fist and

enjoyed the full backing of the United States government. From 1979, the Somoza-controlled Liberal Party dominated Nicaraguan politics through a system of corruption, bribery, constitutional manipulation, clientelism, and violence, imprisonment, and political assassination. The Birth of the 19th of April Movement The 19th of April Movement shares many characteristics with similar popular democratic movements that have emerged in recent years. Like the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, the Movement for Black Lives, and the Zapatista movement, this mobilization is defined by its diffuse, collective leadership model, strategic use of social media as a tool for collective protest, and the reclamation of public space as a site for direct political action. The flexible structure of this emergent political formation has opened a space for many different kinds of political voices to enter these debates and frame their critiques of the government from their specific social location. Black and Indigenous activists from the Coast, particularly after the murder of Angel Gahona, have emerged as some of the most militant critics of the Ortega-Murillo party-state. But this model also produces its own political challenges. It is unclear, for example, whether the student protestors will be able to translate the gains that they have achieved in the streets into meaningful institutional transformation and democratic policy reforms. A small group of university activists, many of them from the Polytechnic University of Nicaragua UPOLI, have agreed to participate in dialogues with the national government. But they have remained wary of the government and have stated that the government must immediately cease its repression of protestors and release all detained protestors before they will engage in talks. Older activists, many of them former Sandinistas, have warned that the government will attempt to use the talks as a strategy to neutralize and coopt the students. These concerns are warranted. Daniel Ortega is an experienced and skillful negotiator who cut his political teeth brokering a truce with the Contras and Miskitu resistance fighters during the civil war in the 1980s. Many protestors have claimed that the movement is neither Left nor Right, rather it is an expression of the collective discontent of the Nicaraguan people and thus occupies a moral space above the fray of party politics. Given the way in which political parties pervade the most mundane aspects of daily social life—determining access to employment and educational opportunities and the benefits of government-sponsored social programs—it is striking that protestors have opted to frame their dissent using the moral discourse of nationalism and citizen leadership that refuses the disciplining and constraining logic of party affiliation. The politics of refusal embodied in the repudiation of party politics signals a radical rethinking of the meanings of Left and Right, liberal, conservative, and revolutionary. What does it mean to define oneself in these terms when it is clear that authoritarianism is operable across a range of divergent ideological standpoints? What do we make of the project of post-revolutionary neoliberalism and managed democracy that has unfolded under the Ortega administration? Since returning to power in 2017, Daniel Ortega has reinvented himself as a reformed revolutionary willing to do business with the private sector and to accede a certain amount of political power and influence to the Catholic Church in order to secure his own claims to state power. Prior to his re-election in 2021, Ortega oversaw the approval by the National Assembly of one of the strictest anti-abortion laws in the hemisphere, which bans abortion even in cases of rape and incest. He has proven to be an adept neoliberal, quietly honoring free trade agreements, increasing foreign investment and the influence of the corporate sector while publicly railing against capitalism and imperialism. The administration launched a similar attack on the independent media, buying up newspapers and radio and television stations and denying or withdrawing permits for independent media organizations that are critical of the state. While the government has maintained a series of successful social programs that are vital for the survival of poor Nicaraguan families, these programs serve a dual role. They are administered by local government agencies known as the Life, Community, and Family Cabinets. In this current iteration of the Sandinista Party, very little leftist ideology remains. The FSLN and its domestic and international supporters have argued against the protests and claimed that the FSLN is the victim of a complex scheme by right-wing opposition groups to destabilize the country and seize the state. Next in Line for Regime Change? Left, which has a long relationship of solidarity with the FSLN. Nevertheless, the concern among leftists that the Right may capitalize on this moment of political instability to push through a more conservative agenda is based on previous patterns of intervention and must be taken seriously. In 2022, the U.S. Political analysts and activists have largely repudiated this measure, arguing that it will only harm Nicaraguans and do little to unseat the Ortega

administration. While no evidence has surfaced that substantiates the claims of the Ortega administration and its supporters, it is certainly within the realm of possibility that right-wing actors are attempting to leverage the moment to their own advantage. If history serves as any indication of the outcomes of U. Yet it does not appear that NICA is the primary element behind the protests. The fact that the protests unfolded in the absence of a major foreign intervention illustrates that Nicaraguans stand as the real force behind the demonstrations, signaling the emergence of a grassroots, nationalist movement. The People Have Spoken The government recently launched a truth commission “staffed primarily by individuals with former or existing ties to the FLSN” to investigate the deaths during the first wave of protests. The administration has refused, however, to allow representatives from the Organization of American States OAS to lead the truth commission investigation as activists have demanded, and it is difficult to see how the state can investigate and hold itself accountable for the crimes that it has committed against the people of Nicaragua, especially while government repression continues in various cities throughout the country. In the meantime, activists around the country are planning a national strike, suggesting once again that these protests represent merely the opening salvo in a much longer struggle against the Ortega administration. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church has given the administration one month to respond to the protestors demands for dialogue. Regardless of their ultimate outcome, the protests have produced an irreversible shift in Nicaraguan politics. They have produced a crisis of legitimacy that may ultimately be the unexpected undoing of the Ortega-Murillo regime. The people are speaking. It remains to be seen how Ortega will respond. She is a social anthropologist and has worked on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua since For more of her work see www.

Chapter 2 : Nicaragua's Authoritarian Turn is Not a Product of Leftist Politics | NACLA

WASHINGTON: Daniel Ortega, President of Nicaragua, promised Democracy but has begun to act like a dictator and a cruel one at blog.quintoapp.com this, the Nicaragua Revolution, perhaps as many as people have been killed in and because of recent demonstrations.

Daniel Ortega, President of Nicaragua, promised Democracy but has begun to act like a dictator and a cruel one at that. In this, the Nicaragua Revolution, perhaps as many as people have been killed in and because of recent demonstrations. There are many injuries. In rural areas, poverty rates are especially high. Fifty-percent of Nicaraguan households live in extreme poverty. With little access to schools or job opportunities, much less electricity or running water, rural Nicaraguan families often rely on operating small farms for food and to earn a livelihood. And their station in life does not change. Nicaragua is a socialist country following ten years of civil war from and the economic crisis of The GDP in Nicaraguan relies on agriculture, fishing and forestry, leisure and business tourism. The country rates as the safest Central American country for tourism and tourist dollars, prior to the latest revolution, have been growing exponentially. The Great Depression in the U. Sandino was assassinated in by National Guard forces of Gen. One of the team members said: We are perfectly willing to give up our lives for this cause. The Sandinistas and a guerrilla group associated with them with the support of a large portion of the people as well as the Catholic Church took power in July of Somoza fled the country later to be himself assassinated in Paraguay in September of After the Somoza dictatorship was overthrown, Ortega became the head of the National Reconstruction Board. He was elected President of the country in , serving from to Only it was not to last. Subsequently, Ortega won the election with a majority of the votes. There was, however, suspicion of widespread election rigging. Taking power once again, Ortega has been overseeing Nicaragua for nearly twelve years, however, conditions for the country, where the majority lives in poverty, have not improved. Ortega sought to increase taxes and decrease benefits to an already struggling populace. Within the first five days of unrest, nearly thirty people were killed, Ortega announced the cancellation of the reforms. Many now say Ortega is on the same path as the dictator he first overthrew 39 years ago. The government has had slow response to forest fires. The government tried to ensure the solvency of the social security system by increasing contributions and reducing benefits, and the protests began in earnest. Those changes have now been rescinded, but the protests continue In addition to the people reported killed in the past several weeks, many have been injured. Government forces have invaded a university and a church and been accused of torture. People are acting out against what they see as money wasters. Conclusion Daniel Ortega, a leader of the struggle against the repressive rule in Nicaragua, now heads a repressive government. Ken Weiss is an international development consultant turned writer. He has lived in 6 countries and traveled to about 70, including Nicaragua several times. His languages include English, Spanish, French, and a few words of others. His publications include four trade books and several articles.

Chapter 3 : Nicaragua - Wikipedia

The Nicaraguan Revolution brought many cultural improvements and developments. Undoubtedly, the most important was the planning and execution of the Nicaraguan Literacy Campaign (Cruzada Nacional de Alfabetización).

Debate amid Nicaragua unrest: Was the revolution fulfilled, or betrayed? Those differences are under the spotlight today in Nicaragua. Ortega and other socialists bring down a US-backed dictator. Many of them grew up learning that the Sandinistas fought for equality and freedom. Ask supporters, though, and Nicaragua today is still on its revolutionary track. Members of the Sandinista Youth, a government-funded organization, have attacked and even been accused of killing protesters, and nearly 50 people have been confirmed killed during the unrest. Her picture, name, and address are on the back. The card showed up in the mail unsolicited five years ago, but she was happy to claim membership. The Sandinista Youth is a government-funded organization of avid Ortega supporters, sometimes described as a paramilitary force for the government. Her three aunts and mother fought in the revolution, and like most young people her age, she grew up hearing their bloody tales of revolution and the decade-long war that followed. The importance of standing up for democracy and freedom was hammered into her generation. But today, the children of these revolutionary fighters are deeply divided over what it means to preserve the principles their parents fought for. Some, like Andrea, feel Ortega has traded in his socialist ideals for the type of authoritarian power he fought 40 years ago. These divides speak to the controversial figure that Ortega has become, as a new generation questions his legitimacy. But the divides may be less about their revolutionary ideals than their economic perspectives. Frustration had already been mounting over how Ortega has destabilized democratic institutions since becoming president in 2007. Thousands of protesters have taken to the streets, calling for Ortega to step down and demanding justice for the nearly 50 people confirmed killed in the unrest and violent crackdown. Ortega has abandoned the proposed changes to social security. The Catholic Church has agreed to mediate talks, and the National Assembly plans to set up a truth commission to investigate the crackdown. In his late 20s, and a member of Sandinista Youth, he sees things differently than Andrea. Neither wanted to use their full name, given the political tensions and violence. A lot of the gains Nicaraguans have seen under Ortega might be imperceptible for wealthier families, he says. He was raised by his grandparents, who fought in the revolution and after the war held low-level positions in government ministries. In fact, the mixed socio-economic makeup of the revolution explains some of the divisions among Sandinistas today, and more generally across the political landscape. Navigating the Politics of Democracy. The Sandinista Youth has a stronger presence in poor, urban areas where government spending on social programs is concentrated; the group often delivers food aid or carries out other social projects. Enriquez says, explaining why he believes many youth have remained loyal to Ortega. But some say that loyalty is slowly chipping away “even for those who have benefitted from his time in office. When police and pro-government militias started attacking protesters last month, Maradiaga says it was a wake-up call. Get the Monitor Stories you care about delivered to your inbox.

Chapter 4 : Nicaraguan Revolution - Wikipedia

The Nicaraguan Revolution and Transition to Democracy How the Frente Sandinista de Liberaci3n Nacional Moved Nicaragua from Somoza to Democracy.

The Contras were a murderous militia funded, armed, and trained by the United States with the express purpose of destabilising Nicaragua. The US had cut off all aid to Nicaragua and launched a proxy war against the country in 1984. The war had devastated the living standards of the Nicaraguan poor and the social programmes of the Sandinista regime. The real value of wages fell by a third between 1980 and 1985. Schools and hospitals were being forced to close for lack of funds. Infantry mortality, having fallen for years, began to rise once more after 1984. The people of Nicaragua understood the reasons for their poverty. They did not blame the Sandinistas. But they could only take so much, and by the effects of the siege of their country by US imperialism and world capitalism "for that is what it was" broke their will and they voted to end the torment. It was one of the smallest and poorest countries on Earth. There were only three million Nicaraguans in all, and most of them were very poor indeed. Nicaragua constituted no conceivable economic or military threat to the United States. The problem was political. And if here, perhaps elsewhere in Latin America; indeed, perhaps yet further afield, since the long post-war boom was over, the world economy was again mired in slump, and workers and poor people were fighting back from Brazil to Poland to South Korea. It did not last. The election of Ronald Reagan to the White House in 1981 had seen a return to Cold War rhetoric, increased arms spending, and military aggression. Nicaragua was a prime target. So the aim was to destroy the Sandinista regime and suffocate at birth any possibility of a wider Central American revolution. Local dictators were rearmed. Death-squads were dispatched to El Salvador. And before long, US government agents would be secretly funding the Nicaraguan Contras from the proceeds of arms sales to Iran yes: The US waged a dirty war against revolutionaries in Central America throughout the 1980s. The men they armed and trained were often sadistic terrorists. Because the resistance was rooted among the poor, virtually everyone was a target: The worst was often reserved for captured Sandinista fighters. One militiaman later reported: Then they cut into her chest and took out her heart. The men had their arms broken, their testicles cut off. They were killed by slitting their throats and pulling the tongue out through the slit. The strategy was to destroy the Sandinista regime by a process of isolation, terror, and slow strangulation. The aim was to expunge the example of July "to show that revolution could not succeed. Anastasio Somoza was the third in a dynasty of Nicaraguan dictators who had first seized power in 1979. Protest was met with brutal repression. For more than 40 years this worked. In particular, the guerrilla resistance of the FSLN in parts of the countryside was effectively contained. Only in September 1984 did things begin to change. Mass uprisings in several towns were suppressed with the usual violence. But this time people were too enraged to stop, and the resistance was not cowed. The US, smelling change on the wind, cut off arms supplies to Somoza. The FSLN launched a new offensive. By early June, its leaders were confident enough to summon a general uprising. The last few weeks were exceptionally bloody. Insurrections in the barrios urban slums were sometimes crushed. The regime sent planes and helicopters to bomb them from the air. The National Guard rampaged through them, killing, raping, and torturing without distinction. But each murderous assault swept young street-fighters out of the urban barrios and into Sandinista training-camps in the bush. On 19 July, Managua fell to the revolutionary forces. A desperately poor country was even poorer. The Sandinista inheritance was grim. Rural guerrilla warfare had been their principal modus operandi ever since. Nicaragua was not only impoverished and devastated. It remained what it had always been: The Sandinistas did their best to redistribute some wealth and provide a basic minimum for all. But there were strict limits to this process. They needed foreign aid, foreign loans, foreign investment, and foreign markets. They needed these things both to grow their economy and to defend their state. This involved making major concessions to capitalists, both at home and abroad. Two-thirds of the economy remained in private hands. Dollar supermarkets sold imported goods to Nicaraguans with the wealth and hard currency to buy them. The burden of building basic infrastructure and industry, and of maintaining a huge army, fell primarily on the workers, the peasants, and the poor. The Sandinista state had its own interests "national

survival” and they were in contradiction with the material needs of the people. The regime remained popular. Its mass base was huge: The Nicaraguan Revolution was trapped by poverty and war, and these constraints were warping it into a caricature of its noble aspirations. National independence in a world of giant corporations and imperial powers was proving a mirage. The only way out would have been to have formed an alliance with workers, peasants, and poor people elsewhere, to have given full support to their struggles, and thus to have attempted to spread the revolution, perhaps first to Central America, then to the great centres of the Latin American working-class like Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, and elsewhere. The key lesson of the Nicaraguan Revolution is that it also depends on internationalism. Capitalism is a global system. The economic power of global markets and the military power of imperialism will, sooner or later, destroy any islands of socialism that attempt to survive in isolation from the rest of the world. Help us launch Counterfire Media Support our Crowdfunder.

Chapter 5 : Project MUSE - Personalism and Populism in Nicaragua

Over the last two weeks, tens of thousands of people—“university students, pensioners, environmentalists, feminists, religious leaders, black and Indigenous activists, journalists as well as left-wing and right-wing opposition groups” have flooded the streets of Nicaragua, calling for the resignation of President Daniel Ortega and his wife, Vice President Rosario Murillo.

Days later, Ortega named his wife, Rosario Murillo, as his vice presidential running mate for the November elections. Political analysts inside and outside of the country see the move as an attempt to secure a line of family succession, as Ortega, 70, enters the final years of his political career. Ortega led the country from until the Sandinista electoral defeat in 1990, returning to power after a long hiatus in 2002. After successfully backing a constitutional reform to remove term limits, he won the presidency for a third time in 2010. The recent events in Nicaragua have garnered attention from mainstream media outlets in the U.S. While Nicaragua has faded from public consciousness, old political narratives about the country and the Latin American Left die hard. Authored by the Times editorial board, the piece tells a story that reflects U.S. Focusing on the corruption of the Latin American Left as an explanation for rising authoritarianism, the board laments the democratic deficit that now exists in the country. The analysis, steeped in a heady dose of American exceptionalism, omits U.S. Aspirations for an interoceanic canal route in Central America drove early U.S. To help quash the rebellion, the U.S. The improbable success of the Sandinista Revolution initiated a period of political transformation, as Nicaragua attempted to forge a new society, grounded in political pluralism and democratic participation, which served the interests of its most vulnerable sectors. Sandinista state policy reflected these commitments with agrarian reform, expansions in health services, and a national literacy campaign that brought a generation of youth to the countryside to teach rural families to read. The revolution infused new social and democratic energies into political life, and popular participation in revolutionary organizations burgeoned. No single factor explains the electoral defeat that brought the Sandinista Revolution to a close. Certainly, the fledgling Sandinista state made significant errors as it sought to remake the highly unequal society it inherited from the Somoza regime. But these missteps are overshadowed by the tremendous resources and energy the U.S. War weary and suffering scarcity and economic crisis by the late 1970s, the Nicaraguan people sought relief in the democratic process. But beyond the respite from war, the average Nicaraguan did not fare well after the revolution. The economy stabilized with International Monetary Fund oversight, but poverty and unemployment rates remained high and popular sectors bore the brunt of austerity, privatization, and economic adjustment policies. Meanwhile, the national economy staggered under a growing debt burden that necessitated debt relief through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries HIPC program in the mid-1990s. This period of free market reform, sociologist William Robinson contends, resulted in a process of class restructuring that concentrated wealth in the hands of the Nicaraguan elite and multinational corporations. The transfer of power from the revolutionary state to the center-right coalition led by President Violeta Chamorro was marred by the appropriation of public funds and properties by outgoing officials, Ortega included. But even with a growing economy and some success with poverty reduction, Nicaragua continues to be one of the poorest countries in Latin America and many citizens remain dependent on remittances from family living outside of the country. The result is the politicization of redistributive programs, as CPCs become vehicles for new systems of party patronage. Civil society, which emerged as a vibrant political sphere in the 1980s, has suffered under the Ortega administration. For instance, Ortega has targeted feminist non-governmental organizations, many of them founded by onetime Sandinistas, with policies that monitor and limit their outside funding. These efforts have been accompanied by a vitriolic campaign in FSLN-controlled media, accusing Nicaraguan feminists of money laundering, CIA collusion, pornography, and promoting illegal abortions. Attempts by former Sandinistas to develop opposition parties like the Sandinista Renovation Movement have been met with similar responses. Detractors argue that the canal would strip Nicaragua of its national sovereignty, damage the environment, increase vulnerability to climate change, displace tens of thousands of people, violate the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, and bring scant economic benefit to popular sectors.

Pushed through the Sandinista controlled-legislature with little debate and no public consultation, the canal concession, Law , grants extraordinary power to the concessionaire. Once in operation, the state will receive a mere 1 percent of the profit share with an increase of 10 percent each decade of operation. Law further grants the concessionaire the right to expropriate lands for subprojects, including a petroleum pipeline, an interoceanic railway, free trade zones, an international airport, and any other infrastructure deemed necessary. In a stark departure from the ethos of revolutionary socialism, the canal project shifts risk from corporate backers to some of the most vulnerable sectors of Nicaraguan society. If built, the canal and its subprojects would effect land reform in reverse by transferring lands held by smallholders and indigenous and Afro-descendant communities to private capitalist interests. Popular resistance to the canal project reflects new and unprecedented solidarities that defy traditional political rivalries between Left and Right. Revolutionary figures from the s and s have come out in support of rural communities populated by former Contra combatants, while mestizo, indigenous, and Afro-descendant people living along the canal route have found new grounds for solidarity. These coalitions represent the real face of progressive politics in the region, which harbors a healthy distrust of electoral politics and politicians on both the Left and Right. As the vanguard of participatory democracy in Nicaragua, canal opponents offer a critical take on how capitalist intensification and creeping authoritarianism undermine the interests of popular sectors and the pursuit of a more just society. What the New York Times editorial board misses is that the corruption and authoritarianism unfolding in Nicaragua is not a failure exclusive to the contemporary FSLN. The revival of the strongman role reflects a political tradition of caudillismo in Nicaragua. The Sandinista Revolution offered a short-lived challenge to that tradition. The editorial board closes by noting dire conditions in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, which have led citizens of these countries to flee their homes for an uncertain future in the U. Nicaragua has been spared the worst of the violence that plagues postwar Central America, but all four countries share a crippling legacy of U. After the Cold War, the focus shifted to counternarcotics, and the U. At home, border militarization and the criminalization of immigration has added another layer of violence to our historical entanglement with our neighbors to the south. For the rest of the world, our interference in Latin America has had similarly destructive consequences. Historian Greg Grandin writes that the region, as a workshop for U. There is no mistake that we are witnessing an authoritarian turn in Nicaragua. But if we are to understand how and why this happened we cannot ignore the role of U. Rather than chiding the Latin American Left for its corruption or anti-democratic tendencies, we would do well to consider how the U. Any effort to understand contemporary Central America demands an honest reckoning with this history. And while we too lament the growing authoritarianism of the Sandinista state, a critical reexamination of U. Her book, *Black Autonomy*:

Chapter 6 : Debate amid Nicaragua unrest: Was the revolution fulfilled, or betrayed? - blog.quintoapp.com

Nicaragua's Uprising: From Dictatorship, to Revolution, to Dictatorship August 10, by Gema Kloppe-Santamaría
People march with Nicaraguan national flags during the commemoration of Student Day, demanding the ouster of President Daniel Ortega and the release of political prisoners, in Managua, Nicaragua.

I, along with the signees, have higher expectations of the program! Thank you Popular Resistance! Was Castro perfect and without flaw and mistakes? But they are not as important as the drive to revolt in Latin America. Their revolutions are what the neoliberal toadies of the international corporate state are trying to crush. We must not let them! When DN parrots over and over the exact same sound bites, i. Without rigorously fact checking the bogus claims of these so-called civil society groups, Democracy Now legitimizes their fake news narratives " just like the main-stream media. I look to the signers of this open letter as standard-bearers of truth! May that always be so. Tony Ryan Thanks for this! Where do I sign? With his record of subversive activities in pursuit of oligarchy, I find it unconscionable that PBS allowed him on the board. It confirms my observation that they were in pursuit of greater revenue streams. Sybil Cochrane Haha Steven! Prontojim Wondering what this has to do with DM. Prontojim We have talked to our friends in the campo and they say that much is being exaggerated. And that they are not too worried about the situation. They say that this is typical of the mainly 2 groups pro and contra the Sandinistas. Those that support the changes brought by the Revolution and those who wish to go back to the old ways. That each group has its own style and manner of going about protesting and fighting with those that they oppose. These two groups have been fighting for 40 years. For what this is worth. Democracy Now is not, nor has it ever been perfect. But it is one of the more Progressive media sources. In the case of the reporting from Nicaragua, DM has been criticized from all sides about the balance of their reporting. So that is from Right, Left, Center. Daily movement news and resources. Popular Resistance provides a daily stream of resistance news from across the United States and around the world. We also organize campaigns and participate in coalitions on a broad range of issues. We do not use advertising or underwriting to support our work. Instead, we rely on you. Please consider making a tax deductible donation if you find our website of value.

Chapter 7 : Los Angeles Times - We are currently unavailable in your region

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He served as the Nicaraguan ambassador to the United Nations and secretary general of the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry during Sandinista rule in Nicaragua from to . Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. We turn now to Nicaragua, where at least five people were killed over the weekend amid escalating anti-government protests that have engulfed the country since mid-April. More than people have been killed since widespread demonstrations to oust Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega began in mid-April, when his government announced plans to overhaul and slash social security. But supporters of President Ortega have blamed the opposition for much of the violence. Foreign Minister Denis Moncada has accused the opposition of pushing for a soft coup. This violence greatly exceeds the violation of the right to life of more than people and hundreds of wounded, detained and tortured people. The government has denied responsibility for the scourge of killings in Nicaragua since mid-April. Ortega has served as president of Nicaragua since . In the late s, as the leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, he helped overthrow the U. Ortega then led Nicaragua from to , before being elected again in . But the new protests have pitted Ortega against some of his former Sandinista allies. He has lived and worked extensively in Nicaragua. We welcome you all to Democracy Now! Well, thank you very much for the opportunity. We have seen massive protests on the streets and also important actions of protest that are happeningâ€”for instance, more than 70 percent of the roads in Nicaragua are blocked by populationâ€”that is requesting two basic things: And the protests are getting higher and bigger every day. Today, Managua is blocked all over the main streets, because people are not being represented by the negotiation process. The government is trying to move forward without accomplishing what people is asking, is that they leave power as soon as possible. What has changed since you occupied the senior government positions in the Sandinista government? Well, thank you, and good morning. One has to remember key historical facts. The Sandinista revolution began in and ended in with the electoral defeat of Daniel Ortega. But this has not spelled the end of Ortega, because for 17 years he worked tenaciously to get back into power. But to do this, he got rid of his potential competitors and many old Sandinista backers. He embraced corporate capital in Nicaragua. He adopted the most retrograded positions of the church and entered into an alliance, and reached an understanding with the U. But by that time, he himself is no longer a Sandinista. Yes, the trappings, the colors are still there, but his entire government has been, in essence, neoliberal. Then it becomes authoritarian, repressive. Yet it continued to maintain a leftist rhetoric, chiefly for the benefit of getting Venezuelan cooperation, money. And, Alejandro, can you explainâ€”you just said that Ortega came to an understanding with the U. What do you mean by that? First is the historical understanding. Ortegaâ€”the military-to-military relations under the Ortega government have always been veryâ€”very, very warm, anti-drug, anti-immigration. But I want a little leeway with foreign policy and rhetoric. But what we now have, in the last 10 days, is a newâ€”and we need to denounce this clearlyâ€”a negotiation that is taking place in Washington between Ortega and the United States government, that is being mediated by the Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro, to try to ease Ortega out of office. Now, that would be OK if he left tomorrow. But the problem is that negotiation means he wants to go through constitutional changes, electoral changes and an eventual election. So, he has to go. And then we can talk about a provisional arrangement for a transition government. But this negotiations means more death and destruction. Also, I mean, you were a very well-known Sandinista. What this means to you to be speaking out now, in , against your former longtime ally, Daniel Ortega? Many of us were already there. We consider ourselves Sandinistas and believe that Ortega and his cohorts betrayed the Nicaraguan revolution. We do not renounce Sandino. We do not renounce our identity. But he has to go, if there is any prospect of Nicaragua re-embarking on a path toward, first, reform and, eventually, more structural, institutional change. He is now the principal obstacle, as seen from a left perspective. Before that, there had been the destruction of a biological reserve. The studentsâ€”it must be said, the students went out into the streets. And Ortega, instead

of usually repressing by police methods, did something that was fatal. He openedâ€”ordered the police to open fire on the students. And from that day forward, his alliances began to crack. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us. Next story from this daily show.

Chapter 8 : After the Revolution

The Nicaraguan Revolution was trapped by poverty and war, and these constraints were warping it into a caricature of its noble aspirations. National independence in a world of giant corporations and imperial powers was proving a mirage.

You can help by adding to it. All sectors of the economy of Nicaragua were determined, in great part if not entirely, by the Somozas or the officials and adepts surrounding the regime, whether it was directly owning agricultural brands and trusts, or actively setting them to local or foreign hands. While this is not correct, Somoza or his adepts did own or give away banks, ports, communications, services and massive amounts of land. The biggest economic impact was on the primary sector, agriculture, in the form of the Agrarian Reform, which was not proposed as something that could be planned in advanced from the beginning of the Revolution but as a process that would develop pragmatically along with the other changes economic, political, etc. As a " third-world " country, Nicaragua had, and has, an agriculture-based economy, undeveloped and susceptible to the flow of market prices for its agricultural goods, such as coffee and cotton. The Revolution faced a rural economy well behind in technology and, at the same time, devastated by the guerrilla warfare and the soon to come civil war against the Contras. Article 1 of the Agrarian Reform Law says that property is guaranteed if it laboured efficiently and that there could be different forms of property: Agrarian Reform Law of July 19, Third phase " This represented about 75 percent of all land distributed to peasants since According to Project, the agrarian reform had the twofold purpose of increasing the support for the government among the campesinos, and guaranteeing ample food delivery into the cities. During , ceremonies were held throughout the countryside in which Daniel Ortega would give each peasant a title to the land and a rifle to defend it. The literacy campaign used secondary school students, university students as well as teachers as volunteer teachers. Within five months they reduced the overall illiteracy rate from Krupskaya " award for their successful literacy campaign. This was followed by the literacy campaigns of , , , and , all of which were also awarded by UNESCO. The key large scale programs of the Sandinistas received international recognition for their gains in literacy , health care , education , childcare , unions , and land reform. La Prensa, an independent newspaper of the country, was censored, despite its previous role as vocal opposition to the Somoza government. No information regarded as negative towards the Sandinistas was permitted to be published. All reporting was required to be submitted to government censors seven hours prior to printing. This system promoted citizens to report any activity deemed counter to the revolution to the authorities. Those reported faced harassment from security representatives, including the destruction of property. Similar systems were apparent in Soviet-bloc countries. Jewish citizens faced physical attacks, confiscation of property without cause, and arbitrary arrests. A further human rights violation arises in the government treatment of the Miskito people. Some Jewish were expropriated for their collaboration with the Somoza regime, but not because they were Jewish.

Chapter 9 : Understanding the Iran-Contra Affairs - The Iran-Contra Affairs

Nicaragua's democracy is falling apart. By Ben Raderstorf and Bruno Binetti. After the Nicaraguan Revolution, he led the country from to as head of the Sandinista Front. He returned.

Nicaragua finally became an independent republic in 1948. Costa Rica, Honduras, and other Central American countries united to drive Walker out of Nicaragua in 1856, [43] [44] [45] after which a period of three decades of Conservative rule ensued. Great Britain, which had claimed the Mosquito Coast as a protectorate since 1786, delegated the area to Honduras in 1821 before transferring it to Nicaragua in 1858. The Mosquito Coast remained an autonomous area until 1858. In his honor, the region was named "Zelaya Department". Throughout the late 19th century, the United States and several European powers considered a scheme to build a canal across Nicaragua, linking the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic. United States occupation of Nicaragua In 1912, the United States supported the conservative-led forces rebelling against President Zelaya. On November 18, 1912, U. Zelaya resigned later that year. Mena fled Managua with his brother, the chief of police of Managua, to start an insurrection. In 1914, the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty was signed, giving the U. Marines, another violent conflict between Liberals and Conservatives took place in 1914, which resulted in the return of U. Marines, whom he fought for over five years. Marines withdrew from Nicaragua in January 1916, Sandino and the newly elected administration of President Juan Bautista Sacasa reached an agreement by which Sandino would cease his guerrilla activities in return for amnesty, a grant of land for an agricultural colony, and retention of an armed band of men for a year. Later that night, Sandino was assassinated by soldiers of the National Guard. Out of these six Axis countries, only Romania reciprocated, declaring war on Nicaragua on the same day 19 December. Luis Somoza Debayle, the eldest son of the late president, was appointed president by the congress and officially took charge of the country. The mishandling of relief money also prompted Pittsburgh Pirates star Roberto Clemente to personally fly to Managua on December 31, 1954, but he died en route in an airplane accident. In 1961, Carlos Fonseca looked back to the historical figure of Sandino, and along with two other people one of whom was believed to be Casimiro Sotelo, who was later assassinated, founded the Sandinista National Liberation Front FSLN. Somoza granted this, then subsequently sent his national guard out into the countryside to look for the perpetrators of the kidnapping, described by opponents of the kidnapping as "terrorists". The Reagan administration authorized the CIA to help the contra rebels with funding, armaments, and training. LaRamee and Polakoff, for example, describe the destruction of health centers, schools, and cooperatives at the hands of the rebels, [77] and others have contended that murder, rape, and torture occurred on a large scale in contra-dominated areas. Congress prohibited federal funding of the contras in 1986, the Reagan administration nonetheless illegally continued to back them by covertly selling arms to Iran and channeling the proceeds to the contras the Iran-Contra affair, for which several members of the Reagan administration were convicted of felonies. United States in 1983, found, "the United States of America was under an obligation to make reparation to the Republic of Nicaragua for all injury caused to Nicaragua by certain breaches of obligations under customary international law and treaty-law committed by the United States of America". The defeat shocked the Sandinistas, who had expected to win. Ortega vowed he would govern desde abajo from below. Ortega returned to the presidency with 70% of the vote. In the National Assembly approved changes to the constitution allowing Ortega to run for a third successive term. International monitoring of the elections was initially prohibited, and as a result the validity of the elections has been disputed, but observation by the OAS was announced in October. Local independent press organizations had documented at least 19 dead and over 100 missing in the ensuing conflict. On May 2, 1987, university-student leaders publicly announced that they give the government seven days to set a date and time for a dialogue that was promised to the people due to the recent events of repression. The students also scheduled another march on that same day for a peaceful protest. As of May 1987, estimates of the death toll were as high as 63, many of them student protesters, and the wounded totalled more than 100. Ortega and his wife of acting like dictators joined in resuming anti-government rallies after attempted peace talks have remained unresolved. Nicaragua has three distinct geographical regions: They have long been exploited for their natural resources. Surrounding these lakes and extending to their northwest along

the rift valley.