

42 years after the conquest of Managua

Via [Contrahegemonía](#)

On July 19, like today, the taking of Managua by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) put an end to one of the bloodiest dictatorships Our America has ever known: that of the Somoza clan.

The dictatorship, which was created by Somoza father after Sandino's assassination in the first half of the 1930s, was a favored ally of the United States – “Somoza is a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch,” said Franklin Delano Roosevelt with crude cynicism – and was succeeded by two of the dictator's sons, the last of whom was “Tachito” Somoza. A popular uprising, massacred even by the regime's air force in several cities, forced the three tendencies into which Sandinism in the 1970s was fractured to unite. Combining insurrection in the cities with a guerrilla movement that soon became an army, the victory of the new Sandinism represented a breeze of fresh air, especially for a Latin America devastated by dictatorships shaped by the conceptions of the National Security Doctrine.

This renewal included the decisive weight of Christian revolutionary currents, a leading role for women comrades in the slums and in the FSLN itself, where many assumed leading roles in the armed struggle; an unprecedented concern for the cultural dimension in the formation of subjectivities, “the revolution of the poets,” as it was called. It represented an incredible parable of history where Sandinismo, heir to that “mad army” of peasants and indigenous people led by that mythical leader who had defeated the Yankee occupation in the 1920s, reappeared transmuted into a popular identity and a new army of the people from below who defeated the heirs of

Somoza's father. Huge solidarity demonstrations sprang up, shouting the "No Pasaran" in Nicaragua and here, as in dozens of other countries, in front of the Yankee embassy. The goal was to stop the Contras in neighboring Honduras, trained and funded by Ronald Reagan's United States to overthrow and erode the revolutionary government.

When the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), with its candidate Daniel Ortega, was defeated by an opposition coalition led by Violeta Chamorro in the 1990 elections and handed over the government, we were far more shocked and embittered by its devastating impact than by the collapse of a Soviet Union we had never felt as our own.

The subsequent brutal decomposition of orteguismo, transformed into a regime that is the total and absolute negation of that revolutionary Nicaragua; his persecution of all opposition from below, with special malice toward many of his former comrades who did not abandon the banners and dreams of that era; his alliance with different factions of the ruling class, including the church and the fierce persecution of abortion; his agreement with one of the most repulsive figures of the old regime, Arnoldo Alemán, and the audacity to dare to take a former member of the Contras, Jaime Morales Carazo, as his presidential running mate; the brutal repression and murder of dozens of participants in the 2018 demonstrations; The rape and sexual abuse of his stepdaughter, Zoilamérica, by Ortega with the forced exile of the victim for daring to denounce, are just some of the milestones of this fierce mutation that no confrontation with the United States – however real – can hide.

At this point, there is no genuine relationship between Ortega's regime and the revolutionary resistance processes in Cuba and Venezuela, even with all the nuances of these experiences that we might want to point out. This transformation that both distresses and moves us, especially a generation that was an enthusiastic supporter of that

revolution, should not make us forget, but rather revisit and redefine that emancipatory gesture. And once again, as the combatants enter Managua, we should salute Sandino's hat with a raised fist and raised V-fingers.