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Nicaragua

# Nicaragua Today: “Purgers, Corruption, & Servility to Putin”

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**These comments by former Sandinista militant and now exiled dissident Dora María Téllez, are excerpted from an interview by Carlos F. Chamorro on the Esta Semana program broadcast July 21 on CONFIDENCIAL’s YouTube channel. Téllez, an historian and political activist, analyzed president Daniel Ortega’s speech and the country’s political situation on the 45th anniversary of ousting the Anastasio Somoza dictatorship.**

“[The regime has] an immense fear of any activity that they cannot control. With each passing day, the obsession of the Ortega-Murillo regime is to control absolutely everything. There was total control over the very setting and the staging of July 19, where every person had to remain seated.

“In other words, they hold enormous power and an immense fear of the situation getting out of hand, which is evidence of their political fragility within Nicaragua.

## The Purpose of the New Purges

“[In the recent arrests and purges of military, police and public officials] I see the hand of Rosario Murillo with the absolute complacency of Daniel Ortega. It is a political purge, that is to say, to accuse these high officials of the Ortega-Murillo regime of corruption is very easy, they’re all full of it. There is not one of them who has a clean portfolio.

“So it is quite easy to accuse them of corruption. Ultimately, it’s a political purge, a sweep aimed at establishing in high-level public positions people who are unconditionally loyal to Rosario Murillo and owe her a favor.

“On the other hand, this purge has to do with a warning to all public employees and especially the high officials: whoever moves a little bit, will be removed from the picture and can end up in El Chipote [prison] or fired, in the least severe of cases. They would be mistreated with a high probability of ending up in La Modelo or the women’s prison.

“The situation with (former high-ranking police official and Ortega’s confidante) ‘El Cuervo’ Guerrero is a notification, a warning. It informs everyone who was in the Sandinista Front guerrilla, no matter how old they are, how long they’ve been imprisoned, or how close they are to Daniel Ortega, that none of them have immunity and that they will all face consequences if necessary.

“Everyone will be kept on their toes. That’s the reason for Jorge Guerrero’s imprisonment. He’s 81 years old, and they sent him straight to the hospital, practically. It’s to notify that entire generation to stay in line, without challenging the Ortega-Murillo duo, especially Rosario Murillo, who this generation hardly likes.

“This is part of the succession process, with Laureano (Ortega) coming up behind, so they need to clear the path for Daniel Ortega’s successors. Daniel is fully on board with this purge, which also reflects the regime’s internal disintegration.

“They haven’t been able to eliminate the ‘external enemy.’ Daniel Ortega even said he wants the United States to disappear — his mindset is about making everything disappear. He hasn’t been able to crush the resistance, so now

he’s turning to the ‘internal enemy,’ targeting high-ranking public employees.

“The accusation against the Deputy Foreign Minister (Arlette Marengo) is over a six million córdoba contract (around 160,000 USD), which is a trivial amount compared to the vast fortunes of the Ortega-Murillo family. So, her prosecution is evidently political. The ultimate reason?

“I believe it’s about succession, and Rosario is moving her pieces to position them more advantageously.”

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