

# *Viewpoint July 21 - The Sandinista Revolution today*

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Nicaragua has just celebrated the 35th. anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution, that put a decisive end to decades of murder and oppression by the bloodsoaked dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza.

In stamping out the tyranny of Somoza, the patriots of that Central American country, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, began, 35 years ago, a new era in its Republican life as they wiped out the dictatorship that had cut short the lives of thousands of its sons and daughters.

A period of independence and of profound social and economic transformation began that day.

The Nicaraguan people arrived at this current anniversary as a radically transformed nation that, last year registered, for the third year in a row, an economic growth of its Domestic Internal Product of over 4%. According to the Central Bank, this result is due to successes in the manufacturing industry, agriculture, commerce, services, as well as in the cattle and construction sectors. Also notable are the advances in education, health, and in the struggle against poverty, hunger and unemployment.

The social policies implemented by President Daniel Ortega have had a positive impact on the whole population, especially in those most vulnerable sectors of pregnant women, children and the aged.

Two government programmes have had strong repercussions in the struggle against poverty: the first has granted 600,000 monetary loans without any interest, mainly to unwed mothers, in order to assist them become agents heading up small community businesses.

The second major initiative is known as Zero Hunger, through which animals, seeds and agricultural equipment are distributed among poor rural families to help them launch farm businesses.

The Roof Plan is added to both initiatives seeking to improve living conditions among low income rural sectors.

In 4 years, from 2007 to 2011, construction materials have been distributed among 267,000 rural families across Nicaragua, who have been able to improve their living conditions.

50.000 other dispossessed rural families are scheduled to receive aid within the coming months under the same Roof Plan.

At the same time, the Sandinistan authorities have expanded the reach of the nation's power grid and water and sanitation systems.

While advancing in the solution of domestic needs and problems, the Nicaraguan people are now turning their attention to the major inter oceanic canal that will link the Pacific Ocean with the Caribbean Sea.

This waterway will allow Nicaragua to double its national economy and

become one of the fastest growing economies in the region by 2019. This modern and efficient waterway will radically cut the distances between Latin America and the Caribbean and the whole of Asia. Had he lived, this would have been to the abundant satisfaction of the old admiral himself—Christopher Columbus!

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