

# Luis Anastasio Somoza Is Dead; President of Nicaragua 7 Years

## Member of Ruling Family of Central America's Largest Country Was Castro Foe

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, April 13 (Reuters)—Luis Somoza de Bayle, former President of Nicaragua, died today. He was 45 years old.

He had suffered a heart attack Friday.

His widow and six children survive.

### Sought to Liberalize

Luis Anastasio Somoza de Bayle was credited with sincere efforts while President of Nicaragua from 1956 to 1963 to liberalize the strong-man regime his father, Anastasio Somoza, had imposed on Central America's largest country.

It was a constitutional amendment the soft-spoken, barrel-chested Luis Somoza espoused that kept his more fiery younger brother, Anastasio Jr., commander of the National Guard, from seeking the presidency for the four-year term after his. The younger brother later ran, and he won the national election of Feb. 5, 1967.

The two brothers worked smoothly to keep control after their father's assassination. Their efforts "increased the family fortune to an excess of \$100-million," according to an estimate in the Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations.

And Luis Somoza acted strongly in repressing rebels against his own rule and in urging overthrow of the rival Caribbean regime of Cuba's Fidel Castro.

In April, 1961, Luis Somoza let his northern port of Puerto Cabezas be used for embarkation of the seven-ship invasion flotilla of Cuban rebels trained in Guatemala by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Puerto Cabezas also served as a base for their World War II bombers.

### 'Hairs From Castro's Beard'

"Bring me a couple of hairs from Castro's beard," he was quoted as having told the ill-fated expeditionaries.

Nicaragua has been widely regarded as a Somoza family fief for the last three decades. Anastasio Somoza the elder built his power as commander of the National Guard, and had himself elected President in 1936. He kept the presidency for 10 years, resumed the office in May, 1950, and was planning his re-election when fatally shot in September, 1956.

A genial, efficient individual, he extended the family sway into coffee, sugar, cattle, shipping and aviation, and maintained close friendship with United States Administrations.

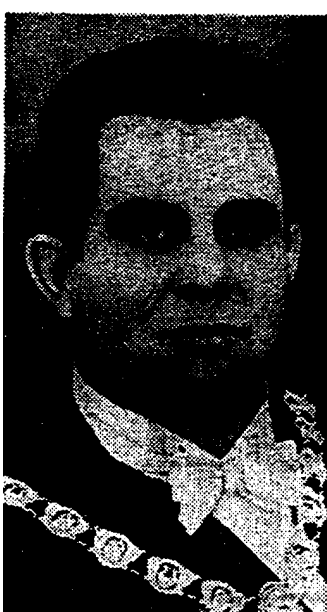
Luis Somoza, the older son born Nov. 18, 1922, was sent at 14 to study at the La Salle Military Academy in Oakdale, L. I. He spent the next nine years in the United States. Before being graduated as an agricultural engineer from the University of California in Davis, he worked as a citrus laborer. He took other agricultural courses at the Louisiana State University and the University of Maryland.

### Attaché in Washington

At 18, he was made a National Guard captain by his father. He served as military attaché in Washington while at school in Maryland. But he rarely donned a uniform, and retired as a colonel in 1950.

He preferred on his return to handle his cattle ranch and sugar and cotton plantations, and he headed the Nicaraguan air line. From 1950, he was a deputy in the Congress, and he helped write a social-security law.

As president of the Chamber of Deputies, he was first in the line of pre-presidential succession and was elected Nicaragua's 31st President by the Congress when his father died. His brother commanded the 4,100-member military force.



Camera Press-Fix

Luis A. Somoza de Bayle as the President of Nicaragua.

Elected President in the February, 1957, election, Luis Somoza declared he would "go as far in establishing a true democracy here as my people will let me." He moved for freedom of speech, press and assembly, and held bi-weekly press conferences that sometimes turned into strident debates with critics.

A long-festering boundary dispute had existed with Honduras over the Mosquito Coast on the Caribbean. Nicaragua had refused to abide by a 1906 arbitration award. Rumors of oil discoveries led to clashes between the two countries at Luis Somoza's inauguration, in May, 1957.

An Organization of American States mission obtained a ceasefire, and the case was referred to the International Court of Justice. Luis Somoza accepted a judgment of the court in 1960 favoring Honduras.

Early in his administration he acted to bar the next presidential term either to himself or any family member in the fourth degree of kinship. But in June, 1959, the brothers had to put down a rebel force from Costa Rica.

### Suspended Guarantees

For six months, Nicaragua was under a suspension of constitutional guarantees. "My father," Luis Somoza asserted, "often warned me that you cannot feed too much meat to a young baby, and now I know what he meant."

The brothers put the blame for another brief rebellion in November, 1960, on Cuban agitation. Not only did Luis Somoza then lend his port for the 1961 Cuban exile effort; to the end of his administration he urged new invasion of Cuba as well.

His administration joined other Central American countries in a common market and a development bank. He sought economic diversification in Nicaragua's traditional two-crop cotton-and-coffee economy with the aid of international loans.

Before giving way May 1, 1963, to his hand-picked successor, Rene Schick, elected in an electoral reform by secret ballot, Luis Somoza saw the country's economy on the rise. Nicaragua shipped its first frozen meat exports in 1959, increased its foreign exchange reserves, built a major Tuma River hydroelectric project and started an oil refinery.

Retiring from the presidency, Luis Somoza became a Senator. He remained generally in the background, although in September, 1963, he denounced the Kennedy Administration's cessation of aid to the Cuban Revolutionary Council, and he sought to rally Cuban exiles behind Manuel Artime for a new liberation effort.

In this year's election, he served as his brother's campaign manager. The brother is scheduled to take office May 1, succeeding Lorenzo Guerrero.

Luis Somoza had married the former Isabel Urcuyo and they had six children, Bernabe, Salvadorita, Luis, Alvaro, Fernando and Gerardo.