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Nicaragua: United National Opposition Closes Campaign

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Feb. 18 in Managua's Revolution Plaza, the United National Opposition (UNO) closed its election campaign with the largest opposition rally in 10 years. Depending on the source, the crowd ranged from 40,000 (BBC Spanish language broadcast), to 50,000 (Washington Post), to 60,000 (AP, Notimex). (AFP reported "tens of thousands.") According to UNO vice presidential candidate, Virgilio Godoy, 200,000 attended the rally. AP said that "international observers and journalists agreed on the estimate of 60,000." Presidential candidate Violeta Barrios de Chamorro repeated campaign promises to end the draft, rebuild the economy and reduce the size of the army. On the same day in Leon, President Daniel Ortega promised 40,000 supporters (Notimex) assembled in the city's main plaza that the Nicaraguan people "will clean Revolution Plaza" which had been "dirtied" by UNO supporters. The candidate's speech came at the end of four hours of winding through city streets. Ortega called opposition supporters "yankees," "counter-revolutionaries" and "Somocistas." (Basic data from AP, AFP, Notimex, 02/18/90; Washington Post, Nicaragua Network, 02/19/90)

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