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Nicaragua: Washington Post/abc Poll Predicts Fsln Win

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Feb. 20, the Washington Post and the ABC TV network announced the results of a joint poll of Nicaraguan voters. A total of 48% of respondents said they planned to vote for President Daniel Ortega, candidate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), compared to 32% for Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, candidate of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). Sixteen percent of those polled would not express their preferences. The survey was implemented by Belden and Russonello among 925 respondents between Feb. 11 and 15. The margin of error is three percent. Field work was handled by the Nicaraguan Public Opinion Institute (INOP). A total of 59% of respondents said they have a positive opinion of Ortega, and more than half indicated approval of his performance as president. For 45% of respondents, conditions in Nicaragua have improved since the FSLN came to power in 1979; 31% said conditions have deteriorated. The survey showed that Ortega was the favorite of young people, while Chamorro's supporters tended to be older and wealthier. Next, 54% of respondents said that if elected, Chamorro would be directed in large part by Washington, while only 20% said she would be an "independent leader." Close to half of the respondents who said they plan to vote to Chamorro said they would live in the US if they had the opportunity. Only one in seven Ortega supporters indicated interest in living in the US. 21% of respondents, most UNO supporters, said they believed electoral fraud by the Sandinistas is possible, compared to 64% who said fraud is not possible. (Basic data from Notimex, 02/21/90)

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