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50,000 Panamanians Protest Government Economic Policies

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 16, 50,000 public and private sector workers rallied in front of the presidential palace to protest current economic austerity policies imposed by the government under pressure from foreign creditors, including the International Monetary Fund. The protesters called for an end to mass dismissals of public employees and a freeze on legislative efforts to modify the labor code. Union leader Isaac Rodriguez of the state-run electricity company said that the demonstration, the largest since the US invasion last December, indicated that Panama "is not a passive country. Those who thought so were wrong yesterday, and they are wrong today. (Basic data from AFP, 10/16/90)

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