

11-21-1990

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### Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "Panamanians Left Homeless By U.S. Invasion Organize Rallies, Demand \$30,000 In Damages Apiece." (1990).  
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## **Panamanians Left Homeless By U.S. Invasion Organize Rallies, Demand \$30,000 In Damages Apiece**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

*Category/Department: General*

*Published: Wednesday, November 21, 1990*

On Nov. 19, some 200 people left homeless by the US invasion last December rallied outside the US Embassy and the presidential palace to demand \$30,000 in damages for each of them. The protesters lived in the El Chorrillo neighborhood, located near the headquarters of the Panamanian Defense Forces. US Ambassador Dean Hinton met with the protesters and promised to visit the neighborhood, which has been razed into a vacant lot. A total of 15,000 people lost their homes during the invasion, and most continue to live in a makeshift camp outside Panama City. Hector Avila, a spokesperson for the demonstrators, rejected a US offer of \$6,500 for each home destroyed and \$800 for furnishings. He said, "They fed Noriega so he could repress us, so there is no room for discussion here. We want at least \$30,000." Spokespersons for the demonstrators said they planned another rally on Dec. 20, anniversary of the invasion. They added that they are pressuring the government to declare that date "a day of national mourning." (Basic data from AFP, 11/19/90)

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