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Nicaragua: Public Employee Demonstrators Clash With Police In Managua

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 22 in Managua, police spokespersons reported that 800 public employees affiliated with the pro-Sandinista National Workers Front (FNT) demonstrated in front of Labor Ministry headquarters, demanding a 100% salary hike and larger 1992 budgets for the Health and Education Ministries. Labor Minister Francisco Rosales ordered anti-riot police to disperse the crowd when several protesters attempted to forcibly enter the building. Police used tear gas and billy clubs to break up the crowd; two police officers and three protesters were injured. Rosales had earlier cancelled a meeting scheduled with union leaders, and refused to receive their proposals. Union leader Lily Soto told the Agence France-Presse that the unions would give the government until Nov. 5 to address their demands. Next, employees of the state-run airline AERONICA tossed homemade bombs outside the Construction and Transportation Ministry headquarters. No damages or injuries were reported. The airline employee union, described as pro-Sandinista, has called on management to raise charges on freight to the Atlantic coast. The union has accused managers of intentionally attempting to bankrupt the company in order to accelerate privatization. (Basic data from AFP, ACAN-EFE, 10/22/91)

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