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## **Honduras: May Day Celebrated By Mass Protest Against Economic Policies**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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May Day in Tegucigalpa was celebrated in the form of a mass protest against the government's economic policies. Participants included an estimated 25,000 members and supporters of the Honduran Workers Confederation (CTH), the General Workers Central (CGT), and the Honduran Workers United Federation (FUTH). According to Notimex, the march represented the first time in Honduran history that all existing labor federations planned a joint protest action. Demonstrators dressed as nurses and doctors waved placards saying, "No hay medicinas." Women carried empty pots and pans and posters saying, "No hay frijoles." Other messages written on placards included condemnation of the government's intent to make foreign debt service payments at the expense of Hondurans' education, housing and nutritional needs, and descriptions of the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank as international criminals responsible for "bleeding" the Honduran people. During a rally in Tegucigalpa's central park concluding the May Day event, demonstrators burned Uncle Sam in effigy. President Rafael Callejas recently noted that his government's austerity policies were required in order to make payments on the \$3 billion foreign debt. In March the government implemented several IMF recommendations, including a 100% devaluation of the lempira, and higher taxes levied on income, exports, vehicle registration, alcoholic beverages and pharmaceuticals to reduce the fiscal deficit. (Basic data from Notimex, 05/01/90)

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