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Honduras: Catholic Church Blasts Government's Economic Policies For Lack Of Creativity

by Deborah Tyroler

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In an editorial published in the Nov. 8 issue of the Catholic Church's official publication, *Fides*, government economic policies are described as slavishly following "neo-capitalist bibles," and "designed in Washington's think tanks," with the effect of impoverishing the middle class, urban and rural workers. According to the editorial, the government's economic policy has produced only "frustration and crisis," and an overwhelming sense of uncertainty. The search for national consensus (*concertacion*) called by President Rafael Callejas "has served only" the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the US Agency for International Development. "There is nothing new here," said the editorial, since the same program has been applied by the "new Latin American democracies." During his campaign, Callejas promised price reductions on basic foodstuffs. Instead, said the editorial, government policies have reduced real incomes of the vast majority, favoring only a small group of exporters and the dominant class. Next, the editorial asserted that the government's real objective is to consolidate the "neo-capitalist developmentalist model, which is outward oriented at the cost of breaking the economy of the middle class, and rural and urban workers." The armed forces were accused of human rights abuses by publishing announcements in the local press offering rewards for persons who denounce others on suspicion of weapons trafficking and supporting "subversion." The editorial emphasized the apparent deterioration in the observance of human rights, evidenced in escalating violence and recent assassinations of popular organization leaders. (Basic data from AFP, 11/08/90)

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