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On April 13, Msgr. Mauro Morelli, Catholic bishop from Duque de Caxias (low-income suburb of Rio de Janeiro), told reporters that the Brazilian National Bishops Conference (CNBB) was preparing a document calling on the government to call off all payments on its foreign debt. The bishops were convened in Itaici, Sao Paulo state, for an annual conference. "We are going to make it clear that the foreign debt has been paid several times," said Morelli. He added that in a 1990 report, the World Bank acknowledged that paying the debt means condemning more people to absolute poverty. According to Morelli, "The World Bank says that from 1981 to 1987, the period of most consistent debt payments, 10 million people in Brazil moved from poverty to below subsistence...At present, 32 million people are forced to survive on an average one dollar per day." (Basic data from AFP, 04/13/91)

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