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## **Honduras: Bishop Blasts Government Economic Policy**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On March 11, Honduran Bishop Luis Santos told reporters that the government's economic structural adjustment policies are "unjust," because "it is immoral to pay the foreign debt by subjecting citizens to extreme poverty and hunger." The bishop called on Hondurans to organize protests against the unethical policies implemented by President Rafael Callejas' government. According to Santos, about 25% of the US\$3.7 billion foreign debt was contracted by the private sector. Most of the remaining 75%, he said, was contracted by military regimes between 1972 and 1982. Over the same period, Honduras received loans totaling about US\$2 billion which benefited private individuals, many of whom occupy top posts in the Callejas administration. Santos said, "If the funds had been utilized in infrastructure projects, bridges, and schools, then it would be worth [sacrificing] in order to pay off the debt. But that wasn't the case." Santos, bishop of Santa Rosa de Copan in western Honduras, is one of the most influential members of the Honduran Catholic church hierarchy. He has been an outspoken critic of the Callejas administration's economic policy for over two years. (Basic data from Agence France-Presse, 03/11/92)

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