From Competition to Cooperation: Threats, Opportunities, and Organizational Survival in the Salvadorean Peasant Movement

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The mid-1990s in El Salvador were marked by a resurgence of popular protest following several years of relative quiescence in social movement activity. At the forefront of the emergent wave of protest were tens of thousands of peasants who mobilized to demand the cancellation of the *deuda agropecuaria*. This was an unpayable $400 million debt they had acquired as beneficiaries of the 1980 Agrarian Reform and several subsequent land transfer programmes. The debt cancellation movement, spearheaded in 1995 by the Alianza Democrática Campesina (ADC), soon broadened to include a new coalition called the Foro para la Defensa y Recuperación del Sector Agropecuario (or Foro for short). But despite their nearly identical goals, ideology, and tactics, for nearly the first year and a half of the debt cancellation struggle, the ADC and the Foro did not combine forces. Instead, they were bitter rivals in this period. Eventually, however, they established a collaborative partnership that was later joined by several other organizations of indebted peasants and farm-owners.

In analyzing the evolution of the relationship between the two main protagonists of debt cancellation, this paper seeks to understand both the forces that kept them apart despite common goals and tactics, and the factors that eventually led them to unite. A growing body of research on the conditions that favour coalition building in social movements points to the importance of both threats to movement participants and political opportunities for movement success. But there have been few empirical studies of intra-movement competition, and fewer still of what happens when factors exist for both cooperation *and* competition. The Salvadorean case illustrates the need for historical analysis which pays attention to changes over time in the degree or intensity of these factors. I argue that threats to the indebted peasants' access to land led to the birth of the debt cancellation movement and, along with the emergence of political opportunities, simulated united action *within* the ADC and the Foro. But threats and opportunities in the early phase of the struggle were not sufficient to overcome the resource pressures fuelling their rivalry. It was only when incentives intensified further, and when failure to cooperate threatened to tarnish the public image of the movement, that the two coalitions resolved to present a united voice.

Most of the research for this paper was carried out between September 1995 and August 1997, with some follow-up work in the summer of 2002. The research consisted of in-depth interviews with leaders and members of the organizations pursuing debt cancellation, analysis of movement-generated documents, news articles, and secondary sources, and ethnographic observations of peasant meetings

and public informational events. Most of the meetings I attended on the debt issue were those of the Foro, which welcomed very broad participation in many of its activities.

Theories of Social Movement Cooperation and Competition

A growing body of sociological literature has been concerned with understanding the conditions that lead social movement organizations to cooperate with each other toward shared objectives. Several scholars concur that threats to the common interests of social movement actors by governments, counter-movements, or other opponents, are a powerful force for coalition formation (Hathaway and Meyer 1992; Meyer and Imig 1993; Staggenborg 1986; Zald and McCarthy 1987). These new or augmenting threats create an 'atmosphere of crisis' (Hathaway and Meyer 1992, 163) that compels groups to unite. An additional factor is the emergence of political opportunities, such as the receptiveness of state actors to social movement demands, and the supportive actions of influential groups in or outside of the political system (Brockett, 1991). In these circumstances, uniting for mobilization enables groups to take advantage of enhanced chances of achieving their policy objectives (Hathaway and Meyer 1992; Meyer and Imig 1993; Staggenborg 1986). Threats can sometimes generate opportunities. For example, allies of movement constituents may provide more material and other forms of support in times of crisis (Hathaway and Meyer 1992).[2]

The responses of many Latin American peasant movements to the neo-liberal policies of the 1980s and 1990s provide ample evidence of the unifying impact of socio-economic threats. Structural adjustment has stimulated the creation of coalitions not only between peasants and urban-based groups, but also among agriculturalists with diverse and sometimes opposing interests. In Costa Rica, small and medium producers allied with each other for disruptive protest actions in the late 1980s against agricultural structural adjustment engineered by the IMF, the World Bank, and US AID (Edelman 1999). An association made up of national peasant coalitions in seven Central American countries formed in the early 1990s to confront and influence an incipient process of economic integration in the region (Edelman 1998). In Mexico, the small, medium, and large indebted farm owners in the Barzón movement have supported the demands of the Zapatista rebels both rhetorically and financially (Mestries 1995). Indigenous peasants in Mexico have allied with environmental organizations (Carruthers 1996) and other non-peasant actors (Petras and Veltmeyer 2001). A similar phenomenon is observed in Brazil, where the landless movement (the MST) is also building links with other sectors of society (de Almeida and Sánchez 2000; Petras and Veltmeyer 2001).

But movement organizations with common goals and demands do not always cooperate. One of the key insights of Resource Mobilization theory is that all formal movement organizations have, in addition to their external goals, a need to ensure their own survival. To sustain themselves, they need resources in the form of money and materials which they obtain from external donors and/or from members. They also seek recognition of authorities and the public (Zald and Ash 1966; Zald and McCarthy 1987; Hathaway and Meyer 1992). The fact that organizations pursuing similar goals seek support and recognition from many of the same institu-

tions and sectors of society exerts a pressure to compete. This impedes coalition building because competition requires them to differentiate themselves from each other (Hathaway and Meyer 1992). Organizations do this by striving to be the most powerful and persuasive representative of their cause (Zald 1980). Typically they try to make their ideology and tactics different from other organizations pursuing the same goals (Zald and McCarthy 1987).

How do movement actors resolve this inherent contradiction between organizational survival needs and the kind of intra-movement strategizing that maximizes goal attainment? Several students of the Resource Mobilization school argue that it depends on the relation between the overall level of external resources that are available to the movement from institutions, individual supporters, and members, and the number of movement actors seeking to attain this support. As the resource base shrinks or is stretched thin by the presence of many movement organizations, they are more inclined to compete than to cooperate (Zald and McCarthy, 1987; Meyer and Imig 1993). In other words, the emergence of new organizations can introduce or fuel a competitive dynamic because more groups are pursuing the same pool of resources. Accordingly, new organizations can be expected to behave more competitively than older, established ones, because they have to work harder to secure their own sources of support (Zald and McCarthy 1987). But this does not predict how movement organizations will behave when, at the same that that external events call for greater cooperation, resource pressures motivate them to compete. Conceivably, an imbalance between overall resources and the number of groups seeking a share of them may coincide with mounting threats and opportunities. In particular, new movement organizations emerging within such a context of crisis may seek to be part of the movement campaign, yet may also seek to establish their own resource base.

In one of the few empirical studies of this issue, Hathaway and Meyer (1992) highlight an additional means by which movement organizations reconcile their contradictory tendencies for competition and cooperation. They argue that organizations taking part in lobby coalitions engage in 'cooperative differentiation'; they present a unified front when dealing with their targets and opponents, but maintain ideological and strategic distinctiveness vis-à-vis their funders. But given that most of the organizations in the coalitions they examine seem to already have distinctive identities, members, and resource bases when the movement campaign begins, coalition formation does not conflict with their survival goals.

In order to understand how movement organizations respond to contradictory pressures to compete and cooperate, it is necessary to examine changes over time in the nature of intra-movement relationships, and in the degree or intensity of factors affecting those relationships. This entails a historical analysis that pays attention to sequences of events, and how social and political actors respond to these events. For Robert Alford, '[h]istorical arguments focus on events in time and place and on concrete actors' through which social phenomena of interest occur (Alford 1998, 98). I adopt this approach to analysing the evolution of the relationship between the ADC and the Foro, focusing on changes in the level of threat and opportunity.

The Agrarian Debt and the Basis for the Struggle

A well researched estimate of the magnitude of the *deuda agropecuaria* shortly after the debt struggle's emergence placed it at $400 million (US). Of this, the lion's share was owed by beneficiaries of two major land redistribution programmes, the 1980 Agrarian Reform, and the Peace Accords programme for former combatants of both sides of the civil war. Beneficiaries of Phase I of the Agrarian Reform accounted for about $228.5 million (Hernández 1997). Under this phase of the Reform, the civilian-military junta had expropriated agricultural properties larger than 500 hectares and transferred the land to 38,000 permanent workers. The land recipients were organized into about 320 cooperatives. While the Salvadorean Institute for Agrarian Transformation (ISTA) compensated the former estate owners and provided administrative and technical assistance to the cooperatives, the cooperatives became indebted to ISTA for the land and machinery. ISTA, and then later the nationalized Agricultural Promotion Bank (BFA), also provided production credit to many of the cooperatives, which became part of their debt package. The size of the cooperatives' debt in the mid-1990s reflected the accumulated unpaid interest and fines for defaulting in addition to the original value of their property. Indeed for many cooperatives, interests and fines represented more than half of what they owed (Hernández 1997).

The Agrarian Reform also included a third phase (Phase II was never implemented due to oligarchic resistance), which converted 47,000 renters into individual owners of parcels averaging two hectares. These individual debtors owed $16.5 million to a separate state institution known as the National Financial Institute for Agricultural Lands (FINATA) (Hernández 1997). This consisted almost entirely of land debts, since, unlike the cooperatives created in Phase I, they had received no production credit to speak of.

The second largest portion of the debt, nearly $100 million, was owed by the approximately 35,000 beneficiaries of the Peace Accords Land Transfer Programme (PTT) (Hernández 1997). The purpose of the PTT was to facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of demobilized government soldiers and former guerrillas of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). Though its beneficiaries received land on a collective basis, they were indebted as individuals; the land debt was distributed evenly among the beneficiaries of each property. They also received credit to finance production – anywhere from $900 to $1700, depending on the quality of their land.[3] An additional portion of the *deuda agropecuaria*, $37 million, consisted of past production credit loans to 2,000 private sector farm owners (PRISMA 1996).[4]

The struggle for debt cancellation emerged as a way of pre-empting the government's neoliberal-inspired plan to consolidate and recover the agrarian debt. The peasant organizations had good reason to believe this plan, which was part of a larger package of agrarian policies designed with the assistance of the World Bank Mission in El Salvador, was aimed at dismantling the Agrarian Reform. The intent of the policy package, known as the *Matriz de Política Agraria* (Agrarian Policy Matrix), was to rationalize land ownership and streamline the institutions pertaining to agriculture. The stated rationale emphasized the need to 'create a free market for land,' and maintained that the Agrarian Reform 'paralyzed land markets, de-

terred investment, [and] distorted incentives.'[5] World Bank-style debt recovery would make Reform sector land available for private, non-agricultural enterprise.

Additional reasons for seeking the cancellation of the debt were the difficulties experienced by the Phase I cooperatives in obtaining further credit. Many defaulting cooperatives that relied on credit to finance production had been cut off from further loans because of their situation. This had not yet become a problem for more recent land recipients like the PTT beneficiaries, due to a period of grace in their debt repayment. But given the elevated price of their land in comparison with land values in the early 1980s, and the depressed condition of agriculture, they were destined to face the same problems.

Proponents of debt cancellation also highlighted the injustice of the peasants' deepening indebtedness. Many of the causes of loan defaulting were beyond the peasants' control. For example, the civil war had disrupted production and commercialization, particularly in the eastern region where conflict was concentrated. As well, in the case of the Phase I cooperatives, ISTA had not provided adequate technical and managerial training, and in some cases, had even colluded with corrupt cooperative leaders in the siphoning cooperative funds. As the Secretary General of the Alianza Democrática Campesina (ADC) pointed out on a televised debate programme, 'We should look at *why* there are parts of the [cooperative] properties not being cultivated. It's because of financial abandonment by government, and also the corruption and self-enrichment by ISTA technicians and promoters'.[6] As well, the cooperatives' repayment capacity depended greatly on what they produced. It was not a coincidence that the few which had completely paid their debts by 1995 produced either coffee or sugar, or both, as opposed to cereal crops for the domestic market (Hernández 1997). An additional, underlying basis for the debt struggle was the unjust history of the peasants' exploitation at the hands of the landed oligarchy. As ADC leaders pointed out at an assembly to mobilize Phase I cooperativists in its first debt march, they and their ancestors had already paid for the Agrarian Reform land through decades of starvation wage labour for the former estate owners.[7]

The Coalitions

The ADC was created in 1989 by virtually all the peasant organizations that existed in El Salvador at that time. As a united front against the newly elected far right party, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), it could, at that time, accurately claim to be 'the maximum expression of the peasant movement'. Though several organizations left the ADC after the 1992 Peace Accords, about sixteen were still active in the coalition in 1995 (from over two dozen original members). These organizations were of two main types: federations of land-holding cooperatives and associations of landless and landpoor peasants.

All the organizations in the ADC had an interest in debt cancellation. The federations consisted mainly of Phase I cooperatives, with a minority of cooperatives that had obtained land through other transfer programmes or acquired it through private means. While the ADC's largest federation had 118 cooperatives, the rest ranged from about sixteen to thirty. The ADC also included three cooperative federations in which the majority were PTT beneficiaries or traditional sector coopera-

tives. As well, the landless and landpoor associations in the ADC included beneficiaries of Phase III of the Agrarian Reform, the PTT, and the smaller programmes.

Since its creation, the ADC relied on both institutional and disruptive means of expressing its demands on issues such as the deepening of the land reform, augmenting rural salaries, state investment in agricultural industry, the improvement of access to production credit, etc. Like all movement organizations in the post-civil war period, the ADC recognized the need to diversify its tactics beyond *protesta* to *propuesta*. But its use of confrontational direct action both before and after the Peace Accords, seen, for example, in its coordination of a series of land invasions in 1991 and again in 1995, set it apart from many other peasant organizations.

The Foro was publicly inaugurated in November 1995, days after the first ADC march to the Legislative Assembly to demand the cancellation of the debt. From the beginning it was clear that the Foro's composition, decision-making structures, and declared objectives distinguished it from the ADC. Foro founders described it as a space in which all interested actors would collaborate to devise alternative agricultural policies to be proposed to government. Consequently it was a far looser and more informal entity than the ADC, open to participation by any organization and any individual with a declared concern for the direction of El Salvador's agricultural policies. The core participant organizations – those with representation on the Foro's 16-member *Comisión Coordinadora* – included not only peasant associations and federations of agricultural cooperatives (the sole types of actors within the ADC), but also research institutes and the Secretariat of Agrarian Affairs of the FMLN, which had become a political party after the Peace Accords.[8]

Some of the Foro's core members were organizations that had left the ADC after the Peace Accords. Others were groups that emerged after the war, such as federations of former FMLN combatants and associations of demobilized soldiers, both of whom had received land through the PTT. As in the ADC, all Foro organizations had members with unpaid agrarian debts. And although the Foro seemed to eschew protest in its initial public declarations, in practice it combined the use of institutional tactics with street demonstrations.

Neo-Liberal Threat to Land Reform

In the months before the first debt cancellation march by the ADC, in October 1995, the peasant organizations and their allies concluded that the government's plans for recovering the *deuda agropecuaria* posed a serious threat to indebted land reform beneficiaries, particularly the cooperatives. Given recent agrarian policies of the ARENA government, they had good reason to believe that a debt recovery scheme would be one more assault on the Agrarian Reform. The first of ARENA's anti-Reform policies, passed in 1991, permitted Phase I cooperatives to be parcelized into individual holdings. By 1995, 168 or 50 per cent of the total number of phase I cooperatives had opted to partially or completely parcelize under the decree (Araniva, in Montoya 1995, 109). A second law passed in 1995, Decree 14, permitted the cooperatives to sell off portions of their property. Furthermore, it compelled them to do so via public auction, which would permit land to be sold to the highest bidder. This contravened the Agrarian Reform law, which prevented the sale or rental of Reform sector land in order to keep it in the hands of

poor rural producers.[9] These two decrees were logically linked; land held in subdivided cooperatives was much more likely to be sold.

The peasant organizations saw a sinister complementarity between these laws and the debt recovery policy that the government was planning.[10] Given the government's intention to phase out state institutions charged with administering the Agrarian Reform, which it had already begun to fulfil by eliminating FINATA, outstanding debts would most likely be transferred to the private financial institutions. This would mean a shift from current annual interest rates ranging from 6 per cent to 9 per cent, to market rates of over 20 per cent. This increased pressure would make parcelizing and selling land an appealing option to Reform beneficiaries.

Peasant leaders also believed that the properties of Phase I cooperatives in key locations were of interest to national and transnational investors. Two weeks before the first debt cancellation march, ADC leader Eulalio Flores told an assembly of cooperative members:

> We mustn't let the landowners and privileged retake the land. The government wants those cooperatives in potential industrial centres to sell [their land], so that industry and tourism, in the hands of big capitalists, can be developed.[11]

This suspicion was later supported by the statement of a right-wing (but officially independent) deputy in the Legislative Assembly, Orlando Arévalo, who helped formulate the government's debt policy. In a televised debate with ADC leader Eulogio Villalta, he asked rhetorically, 'For those [cooperatives] with tourist potential, why not sell part of the land to pay the [debt]?'[12]

The peasant organization's fears about the government's plans were confirmed in March, 1996, when the Economic Cabinet ministers unveiled the proposal they had been working on for several months. They proposed a 65 per cent reduction of the debts of Reform and non-Reform sector debtors conditioned on repayment of the remainder within two years. The bill also built on the government's previous efforts to subdivide the cooperatives by offering an additional discount of 5,000 colóns per person for those beneficiaries who held debts on an individual basis. One of the most dangerous aspects of the bill, particularly for the Agrarian Reform cooperatives, was that the prompt repayment of even 35 per cent of the debt would compel them to borrow from private banks at market interest rates. This would almost certainly lead them to foreclose on their properties. The eventual outcome would be an increase in landlessness and a reconcentration of Agrarian Reform land in the hands of the country's elites. The government's policy was publicly denounced by both the ADC and the new coalition, the Foro.[13] It also prompted additional protest activity – a march and demonstration by the ADC on March 26, and an identical event by the Foro on March 28.

After about a month of investigation and debate on the Executive bill, the Legislative Assembly passed two laws on the debt in May 1996. In the new legislation, the reduction on most categories of debt was slightly higher than in the government's initial proposal. Decree 699, the 'Law of Restructuring of the Agrarian Debt', dealt with the land and bank debts the Phase I cooperatives, and the land debts of all other reform beneficiaries, discounting these debts by 70 per cent. In addition, individual debtors (as opposed to collective debtors like the Phase I cooperatives) would also be relieved of a further 5,000 *colones* per person, so that anyone

owing up to 16,665 *colones* was completely exonerated. This preserved the incentive to parcelization in the Executive's earlier proposal. Furthermore, the period available to take advantage of the discount was decreased from two years to one.

Decree 698, the 'Law of Support for the Reactivation of the Agricultural Sector', addressed the production credit debts of non-Reform sector farm owners and some individual land reform beneficiaries. Decree 698 offered a 40 per cent discount to reform beneficiaries who had become indebted before 1991, thereby excluding the PTT beneficiaries. Non-Reform sector farm owners, whose debt had already been cut by 50 per cent under a 1992 law for producers affected by the civil war, received a further 70 per cent reduction. Despite the seemingly generous discounts offered by the new legislation, clearly it only made the threat to the land security of Agrarian Reform beneficiaries more concrete than it had been before.

Political Opportunities for Debt Cancellation

Alongside the policy dangers that prompted the initiation of the debt cancellation movement, signs that the peasant organizations stood a chance of influencing policy began to appear in early 1996. When decision-makers demonstrate that they are adopting or even simply listening to a movement's demands, movement participants are encouraged to believe that additional collective efforts will be successful (Eisinger 1973; Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 1994). To feed into its deliberations on the government's March 1996 debt bill, the Legislative Assembly invited peasant organizations to present their position on the debt to its Commission on Economy and Agriculture. This enabled their arguments to become part of the official policy debate. This new forum of access to the political system also stimulated further protest activity by both the ADC and the Foro, the latter of which organized a massive, joint march and demonstration on April 25. This event can be seen as an effort by both coalitions to complement their use of the purely institutional channels offered by the Assembly.

An additional sign of the movement's access to the political system was seen in the debt legislation that resulted from this initial consultation process. Despite their gross inadequacies, the two laws passed in May 1996 reflected a minor accommodation of the movements' demands. Movement activists interpreted the slight increase in the amount discounted from most debts as a response to their efforts, evidence of what they could achieve through intensive protest and lobbying. This appraisal of the debt laws was articulated, for example, by Pedro Juan Hernández, who was both a researcher at the San Salvador based National Foundation for Development (FUNDE) and a leader and spokesperson of the Foro. He describes the laws as 'an important step', and as an answer to the protests and proposals (Hernández 1997, 35-36). That there was no mass-based mobilization during the five months that followed the passage of the legislation reflected a new phase of work in which movement leaders investigated the laws' implications for indebted peasants while developing new strategies and goals.

A second type of political opportunity for the movement was the strong and consistent support of an actor within the political system, the FMLN. From the beginning of the debt campaign, the party was an energetic and effective champion of cancellation, both in and outside of the Legislative Assembly. Elected FMLN

members relayed the peasants' debt proposals to the legislature. In interviews and public appearances, they amplified the movement's criticisms of the government's debt policy and their arguments for further debt reduction.[14] Non-elected FMLN members were also instrumental in founding and leading the Foro, whose efforts focused almost entirely on debt cancellation in its first two years. They were also pivotal to the public dissemination of the movement's views of the debt through the news media. The Salvadorean media invariably turned to the FMLN representatives in the Foro, along with the other middle class intellectuals in this coalition, as spokespeople for debt cancellation. This conforms to a widespread pattern in the social movements of indigent groups (Gamson 1990). Nonetheless, this was undoubtedly an indirect stimulus to more protest and lobbying.

Movement Response: Strong Mobilization, Limited Cooperation

Although political opportunities increase the likelihood of movement success, they do not lighten the work of movement activists and participants. On the contrary, a strong and united effort is usually required to take advantage of opportunities. This is why they often lead to coalition building within social movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Staggenborg 1986). In this early phase of the debt cancellation movement, both political opportunities and threats had the effect of solidifying cooperation *within* each of the coalitions involved in the movement, but not between them.

In terms of mobilization, threats and opportunities in relation to the debt united the ADC's organizations more than any other issue in recent years. All of its organizations took part in the debt movement, even the heterogeneous associations, which were simultaneously engaged in a struggle to obtain land for hundreds of their members. These associations, along with the ADC leaders, decided to postpone further mass-based protest for land, and also greatly diminished their lobbying and publicity efforts for the land issue. Furthermore, hundreds of their landless and landpoor members participated in the debt cancellation marches, though their primary goal was land and they had no debts themselves. These organizations' decision to prioritize debt cancellation over land, thereby pooling their efforts with the Agrarian Reform and other cooperative federations in the coalition, was a response to the enhanced opportunities for the debt. The leader of the National Association of Agricultural Workers (ANTA), which was the largest of the ADC organizations involved in the land struggle, admitted, 'March and April [of 1996] have been mainly for dealing with the agrarian debt issue which has detracted from our pressure around the [land issue].[15] As well, the ADC's Secretary General, Eulogio Villalta, stated that they did not want the land struggle to 'dilute' their efforts on the debt.[16]

The atmosphere of crisis stemming from both threats and opportunities for the debt was also a cohesive force among groups that participated in the Foro. This included groups with little history or prior motivation for acting together, such as the associations of former government soldiers in the coalition, and the federations of demobilized guerrilla combatants. As in the ADC, the debt issue became virtually the sole focus of the Foro's work throughout 1996 and 1997. Officially the Foro had established seven *mesas de trabajo* to deal with the major policy themes

of its work: finances, commercialization of agricultural products, technology, law, environment, organization, and social and productive infrastructure. In practice, only the *mesa jurídica*, which was to receive the proposals of the other *mesas* and prepare them for presentation to legislators, and the *mesa financiera*, which focused its efforts primarily on the debt, got off the ground in the two years after the Foro's launch.

The forces for coalition building, however, were not strong enough to bring the ADC and the Foro together. For most of the period from the initiation of the struggle in October 1995 to March 1997, they conducted their debt cancellation campaigns separately. Their lack of cooperation was particularly striking in activities for which separate efforts could have created the impression of disagreement and division within the movement. In this regard, instead of presenting a broad front around a single policy proposal on the debt, on several occasions one coalition called for complete cancellation of the debt while the other called for eliminating only some components of the debt (for example, the interests) and restructuring the rest on soft terms.

The coalitions' failure to work together also prevented them from maximizing the potential impact of their mass-based tactics. A main purpose of street demonstrations is a visual display of support – the greater, the better – for a given set of demands. But the coalitions mobilized many of their marches separately, sometimes within a day or two of each other. The first debt march was carried out by the ADC on October 31, 1995. Though the Foro was days away from its formal inauguration, its member organizations did not take part in the ADC march. The Foro conducted its first protest event for the debt on March 28, 1996. But this was a day after the ADC had carried out its second massive debt march. The following month, the two coalitions jointly organized a single large march and rally. But this proved so acrimonious, with leaders of each coalition accusing the other of trying to dominate the event, that afterwards they were more unwilling than ever to collaborate. True to their resolve, on the first anniversary of the struggle, the ADC coordinated its third march and rally on its own, and the Foro held its second protest event a few days later.

Resource Pressures and Competition

What kept the two main protagonists of debt cancellation from joining forces during the first year and a half of the struggle was their rivalry over access to funding, public attention, policy influence, and membership. Their competition for financial resources, however, was not the outcome of an overall scarcity of external support for the debt cancellation cause. Rather, it reflected the newness of the Foro and its quest to establish its own base of support. Not surprisingly, the Foro acted much more competitively than the ADC, whose position could more accurately be described as defensive.

The *deuda agropecuaria* attracted enormous interest and support from foreign donor agencies and domestic and foreign research institutes, undoubtedly more than any other agrarian issue in the 1990s. These actors supported the peasant movement's efforts on the debt in various ways. Foreign research-advocacy organizations like the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) dedicated re-

sources to studying the debt issue, and to lobbying the World Bank, both directly and through US AID the US Treasury Department, regarding its debt policy prescriptions to El Salvador (Foley, Vickers, and Thale 1997). The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) provided financing to FUNDE to conduct a special study of the probable impact of the government's debt policy.[17] FUNDE itself provided enormous support specifically to the Foro, by taking part in its leadership and helping to draft its policy proposals. But it also supported the movement more broadly by sponsoring or co-sponsoring public informational events on the debt in March 1996 and May 1997, in which both Foro and ADC leaders were key speakers. These events, and an additional public seminar held in December 1996 by two cooperative federations outside the ADC and the Foro, were financed by various international agencies. In addition, FUNDE researchers like Pedro Juan Hernández, and the Salvadorean Programme for Research on Development and the Environment (PRISMA), published critical reports on the consequences of the government's plans for the debt.

These efforts by external actors supported both the ADC and the Foro by reducing the need to expend their own resources on lobbying, investigation, and dissemination. They did not, however, resolve the Foro's need to secure the financing that would support the minimal trappings of a formal coalition – particularly office space and equipment, secretarial assistance, a vehicle, and the like. Through its longstanding partnerships with foreign solidarity organizations and development agencies, the ADC enjoyed relatively stable financing for expenses like the rental of a spacious (though far from luxurious) headquarters, the salaries of its four top leaders in addition to secretarial and technical staff, and special projects like the production of a daily half-hour radio programme for peasants. In contrast, the Foro did not even have its own office for most of the first two years of its existence.

In a context in which other actors are pursuing similar ends, an organization secures its own support by distinguishing itself in its actions and discourse (Zald and McCarthy 1987). The events surrounding the Foro's emergence, more specifically, the nature of its relationship with the ADC at that moment, ensured that it would pursue resources separately from the ADC. The creation of the Foro was initially a collaborative effort among ADC leaders, members of the FMLN, several organizations that had left the ADC, and several new organizations – repatriated refugees, former guerrillas, and former government soldiers. However, tensions between ADC leaders and several key actors in the Foro reached a boiling point about two months before the Foro was publicly launched. ADC leaders were unhappy with the inclusion of a peasant leader they had expelled from the ADC for corrupt use of coalition funds in the Foro's leadership.[18] In addition, they felt antagonized by several Foro participants, including the FMLN. These disagreements prompted the ADC to abandon the Foro. In a conversation in early 1996, the leader of the ADC's land commission, Carlos Rodríguez, explained,

> We don't say that we'll never participate in it. We might, later on, but we put two conditions on our participation: that Reynaldo García be removed from the leadership, and that the FMLN stop trying to ruin the ADC.[19]

Once the two coalitions were separate, the logic of competition for resources defined their relationship and their actions on the debt.

The Foro strove to make itself distinct from the ADC in a number of ways. One way it did so was in the content of its policy proposals to government. Until March of 1997, the two coalitions not only held separate marches (with one exception), but also presented separate proposals to legislators. In this regard, the Foro demonstrated a greater determination and ability to have the last word, as it were. This was seen in March 1996, when the Foro's newly installed *mesa financiera* decided to make its first task the formulation of a 'proposal to the nation' for restructuring the agrarian debt (see table 1). Compared to the only other peasant proposal on the debt to have been articulated to that point – the ADC's call for 100 per cent cancellation – the Foro's was much less radical. It called for only a 65 per cent reduction of the principal of the combined land and bank debts of cooperatives and individual debtors, after cancelling all accumulated interests. Two weeks later, the ADC presented its second *anteproyecto de ley* for the debt. This proposal bore a striking resemblance to the Foro's, suggesting that the ADC was aiming for a position more in line with the critics of its initial demand. Only two days after the ADC's second proposal, however, the Foro mobilized its second debt march to present its own revised version. The Foro now asked for a 100 per cent cancellation of the debts of cooperatives that were deemed unable to pay, and for the others, a 90 per cent reduction of their principal. That the Foro's proposal was more radical than the ADC's was ironic given that several Foro leaders were the most vocal in ridiculing the ADC's initial position.

It seemed, then, that the Foro was determined to distance itself from the ADC whether that meant adopting a more radical or a more conservative position. In fact, its position became more moderate a few weeks later. In late April 1996, the ADC-Foro demonstration presented a joint proposal on the debt that was essentially the same as the Foro's second version. But on the eve of the Legislative vote on the debt in early May 1996, the Foro presented its third proposal to legislators, this time without public fanfare. Instead of calling for the complete elimination of the interests on the Phase I cooperatives land debt, and 90 per cent of the principal, the Foro now proposed an 80 per cent reduction of the combined principal plus interests.[20] This was a more conservative position than the joint ADC-Foro proposal.

Within the first year of its existence, the Foro was successful in its efforts to secure financing from sources outside its membership. Donations from national and international organizations between October 1995 and December 1996 totalled about $14,500, six times as much as the contributions from member organizations.[21] By 1998 it had its own headquarters, secretarial staff, etc. For the Foro, the push to establish this resource base in the early stage of the debt struggle was greater than the incentives for cooperating with the ADC. Arguably, as well, given the high degree of cooperation within each coalition in that phase of the debt campaign, there was relatively little urgency for the two coalitions to join forces. Furthermore, once the Foro began to attract the attention and financial support of international donor community, the pressure to differentiate its policy proposals from those of the ADC was undoubtedly lessened. Its success in this regard arguably permitted it to engage in the kind of 'cooperative differentiation' described by Hathaway and Meyer (1992).

Table 1: Agrarian Debt Proposals

	Agrarian Reform Cooperatives	Individual Reform Beneficiaries[a]
Government, (March 25)	65% reduction of combined land and bank debts, conditioned on repaying the remainder within one year.	65% reduction of combined land and bank debts; additional reduction of 5,000 colóns.
Foro, (March 14)	*Land Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 65% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 15 years at 6%; 5-year period of grace. *Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 65% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 20 years at 4%, with 5 year-period grace.	*Land and Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; reduction of principal by 20,000 colóns; remainder to be paid over 15 years at 6%, with 5-year period of grace.
ADC, (March 26)	*Land Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 65% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 30 years at 6% interest, with 5 year- period of grace. *Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 65% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 30 years at 6%; 5-year period of grace.	*Land Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests and principal. *Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests and principal.
Foro, March 28, 1996	*Land Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 90% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 30 years at 6%, 6-year period of grace. *Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests; 75% reduction of principal; remainder to be paid over 25 years at 4%, with 5-year period of grace.	*Land Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests + principal. *Bank Debt:* 100% cancellation of interests + principal.
Foro, May 7, 1996	*Land Debt:* 80% reduction of interests + principal; remainder to be paid over 20 years at 6%, with 5-year period of grace. *Bank Debt:* 80% reduction of interests + principal; remainder to be paid over 20 years at 4%, with 5-year period of grace.	*Land Debt:* 80% reduction of interests + principal; additional reduction of 10,000 colóns; remainder to be paid over 20 years at 6%, with 5-year period of grace. *Bank Debt:* 100% reduction for anyone owing 10,000 colóns or less; for others, 80% reduction of interests + principal; remainder to be paid over 20 years at 4%, with 5-year period of grace.

Sources: **Government proposal**: Henríquez, José Luis, 'Condonarán 65% de la Deuda Agraria', *Prensa Gráfica*, 26 March 1996, p. 2-C.
Foro proposals: 'Tribuna Agropecuaria' (the Foro's biweekly column), *CoLatino*, 14 March 1996, p. 20; campo pagado of the Foro, in *CoLatino*, 28 March 1996, p. 15; May 7 proposal: Foro working paper.
ADC proposal: *CoLatino*, 27 March 1996, p. 24; interview with ADC technician Ricardo Gómez, 26 March 1996.
[a]This encompasses beneficiaries of the PTT, the July 3rd Accord, members of Phase I cooperatives who had parcelized their holdings, and beneficiaries of an additional land transfer programme implemented in the late 1980s.

New Threats to Movement Constituents

The incentives for greater cooperation on the debt issue began to shift in early 1997. For one thing, the agrarian debt laws were set to expire in May of that year. The laws gave debtors one year to pay the undiscounted portion of their debts as a condition for the 70 per cent reduction. Since most indebted cooperatives and individuals had not adhered to the decrees, the expiry of the reduction would expose them to the government's aggressive plan for recovering the debt. With their debts transferred from the public to the private banking system, they faced probable seizure of their lands. Movement actors therefore needed to persuade the government to extend the decrees while also working on achieving deeper or total debt reduction.

An additional threat to the movement's success in 1997 was the concerted counter-movement activity of forces linked to the ARENA party. In general, a social movement's opponents become more systematic and organized the greater the threat they perceive in the movement's achievements (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). So far, the debt cancellation movement had made an albeit modest impact on the government's debt reduction laws of May 1996. During the election campaign for legislative assembly, it also became evident that the movement had persuaded many legislators that deeper reduction was needed. A few weeks before the election, opposition parties from the right to the centre announced their support for further debt reduction and in some cases complete cancellation.[22] Furthermore, the results of the March 1997 election weakened ARENA's position in the Legislative Assembly, pushing it from a majority to a slim plurality of seats.

It was undoubtedly these circumstances that prompted opponents of agrarian debt cancellation to launch their own publicity blitz. Intellectuals at the right-wing think tank, the Salvadorean Foundation for Economic and Social Development (Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social – FUSADES), were crucial in articulating the anti-cancellation position. Using full page *campos pagados* (paid newspaper advertisements), FUSADES and other opponents of cancellation argued that complete exoneration of the debt would result in an increase of several percentage points in the value added tax, that it would 'break the financial discipline' of the debtors. They even argued that it would be unconstitutional. The ultra-right wing daily, *Diario del Mundo*, also came out strongly opposed to debt cancellation in several editorials in this period.[23]

New Political Opportunities

The campaign for the March 1997 elections provided new opportunities for the movement to influence party positions on the debt. Obviously, all opposition parties had an interest in eroding ARENA's electoral support, and the debt offered them an issue on which to do so. Apart from the FMLN, other opposition parties began to indicate support for deeper debt cancellation during the election campaign. The first to do so was the Partido de Conciliación Nacional (PCN), which had been the main representative of medium and large-farmowners before the creation of ARENA, but continued to represent some groups within this sector. Soon

after, the other opposition parties followed suit. These gradual signs of the movement's influence on the political process were encouraging but, since nothing was guaranteed, they also required a sustained effort from the movement. Consequently, the election campaign was a period of renewed intensity in protest and lobbying around the debt. The opportunity offered by the election was an also an incentive for greater unity within the movement. It was not a coincidence that the ADC and Foro resumed collaboration a few weeks before the election. During their joint march and demonstration in March 1997, they presented a unified proposal for the elimination of all of the remaining agrarian debt.

A further opportunity for movement success emerged out of the results of the election and the actions of the new Assembly around the debt. The new Legislative Assembly voted on June 13, 1997 to extend the two debt reduction laws for another six months, and created a special joint sub-commission of the Legislative Commission on the Economy and Agriculture to study the debt situation and propose a solution. This sub-commission invited all stakeholders to present detailed information and arguments on the debt. With ARENA's power reduced, the sub-commission and the Assembly as a whole were likely to be highly receptive to the movement's demands. This was an unprecedented opportunity for the movement to influence policy. Though the peasant organizations had had access to the legislative process in the movement's early phase, there was no special commission for the debt at that time. Furthermore, it had been an Assembly dominated by ARENA.

The Dangers of Not Cooperating

The reunification of the ADC and the Foro around the debt issue coincided with the threat posed by the impending expiry of the debt laws, and with the incentives for greater collaboration offered by the election campaign. In addition, there were new disincentives to remaining separate, symbolized in the specific circumstances of the joint march that marked their return to collaboration. On the eve of the March 1997 legislative and municipal elections, the two coalitions again planned separate marches, but this time for the same day. Several weeks before the event, ADC leaders began to seek a rapprochement with the Foro for the purposes of cooperation in the upcoming protest. Finding that its efforts fell on deaf ears, the ADC enlisted the mediation of outside actors to persuade Foro leaders to put aside their rivalry. One of these was a well respected Protestant minister who headed a multi-sectoral civil society coalition called the Permanent Committee for National Debate (CPDN). Several Foro leaders vehemently rebuffed his efforts to change their position.

That the Foro was less willing to cooperate than the ADC was also seen at the lower tier of the coalition structure. Within the organizations in both coalitions, leaders met with the rank and file to drum up grassroots participation in the march. At a meeting of ANTA, one of the ADC's largest organizations, leaders reported to the grassroots members on recent interactions between the two coalitions:

> The ADC tried to make an agreement with the Foro, but the Foro rejected going in the march with the ADC… We want each cooperative to bring a banner with the name of the cooperative and the ADC. The ADC is going to bring a huge

> banner saying that it is united with the Foro in this march. We want it to be clear that we're not seeking rivalry.[24]

In contrast, at an ATAES assembly held a few days before the march, Reynaldo García and another ATAES leader shared their contempt for the ADC with those in attendance. They referred to ADC leaders as *caciques*, and added,

> They are only participating with the Foro to help their own image. They try to take credit for a large mobilization by going out in front of it. They want to improve their image right now with the GZT [a German development agency] and Oxfam, and that's why they're joining forces with the Foro.

Closer to the date of the march, however, rumours of the potential for violence between the grassroots members of the ADC and the Foro began to circulate. One Foro leader admitted confidentially that it was these rumours that swayed the holdouts within the Foro to agree to a joint march with the ADC.[25] Hathaway and Meyer (1992) argue that in deciding whether or not to cooperate, an overarching consideration for movement organizations is what they stand to lose by failing to do so. For a peasant march to have degenerated into scuffles among the participants would have been unheard of in El Salvador, and would certainly have distracted observers from the objective of the event. It would also have discredited all the organizations.

The Rewards of Cooperation

Counter-movement mobilization and new opportunities to directly influence the legislative process motivated continued collaboration between the two coalitions. The Foro and the ADC teamed together for three more demonstrations before the end of August 1997. Intra-movement cooperation around the debt broadened still further in the fall with the creation of the 'Frente Agropecuario', by the ADC, the Foro, and six other organizations, including large and medium producers, former civil defense patrols, and a large confederation of Agrarian Reform cooperatives. In contrast to most ADC and Foro members, these other actors were associated with political parties on the centre and right of the spectrum. According to one former Foro leader, the Frente Agropecuario was 'a more temporary thing' that emerged only to address the debt issue, and disappeared with its resolution.[26] But in the view of the Foro's General Secretary, Franciso Saldaña, its political diversity ensured that the movement achieved most of what it was seeking.

> They were sectors that were linked to different political parties, so that good lobbying was done with the different parties, with each one conveying to the party it sympathized with the need for resolving its problems[27].

In November 1997, the Frente Agropecuario encountered exhilarating success that was quickly followed by a bitter setback. That month, the majority of members of the Legislative Assembly voted in favour of 100 per cent debt cancellation, only to have the decision vetoed by President Calderón Sol. But after several more months of lobbying and protest, the Assembly passed a law which many leaders of the struggle, reflecting on their efforts four years later, were largely satisfied with. De-

cree 263, passed in March 1998, not only raised the discounted proportion of the debt from 70 per cent to 85 per cent, but also got rid of the '*pronto pago*' stipulation. For those unable to pay the remaining 15 per cent within six months, it called for the creation of a special line of credit, repayable over twelve years at six percent interest.[28]

Though the Frente Agropecuario dissolved soon afterwards, the ADC and the Foro continued exerting pressure on legislators and bureaucrats around the implementation of the hard won decree. However, they conducted their efforts largely independently of each other. Furthermore, in the years since the Decree was passed, each coalition suffered considerable erosion of their membership relative to the late 1990s. Nevertheless, it was only through peasant lobbying that an $8 million line of credit for payment of the remaining 15 per cent of the debt, called a *fideicomiso*, was finally approved in October 2001. By the following March, however, the fund was still not operational.[29] Because of the government's delay in this respect, and the fact that thousands of debtors were unable to pay their debts within the time frame established by Decree 263, the organizations also had to request numerous extensions of the Decree. A seventh extension of the Decree was granted in May 2002, along with several reforms to the *fideicomiso* aimed at removing several obstacles to peasant eligibility.[30] Foro leader Francisco Saldaña was cautiously optimistic that the 80 cooperatives and 25,000 additional families lacking the resources to pay their 15 per cent to that point would finally be able to benefit from the debt cancellation.

Conclusions

The World Bank's prescription to the Salvadorean government for dealing with the agrarian debt, and subsequently, the political opportunities for influencing the government's policy, stimulated cooperative relations within two major groupings of organizations. As in several other Latin American countries, neo-liberal agrarian policies in El Salvador prompted a high level of coherent, unified action among peasant organizations of diverse composition within both the ADC and the Foro. Yet it took quite some time for the two coalitions to unite behind a single position on the debt. In the early phase of the debt campaign, the incentives for cooperation were not sufficient to bring about a broader united front for debt cancellation. More accurately perhaps, the Foro was not ready in the first year and a half after its emergence to cooperate with the ADC. During this period, it needed to make a distinctive mark on the political landscape in order to acquire the resources necessary for its survival. It was only when the 'atmosphere of crisis' augmented under new threats and important new opportunities for movement success that the Foro became willing to act jointly with the ADC for the purpose of protest and proposal formulation.

Existing theories of coalitions provide only partial answers to the question of how movement organizations behave when they simultaneously face incentives for both cooperation and competition. Analysts broadly agree that threats and political opportunities are important exogenous factors for coalition building, but that movement organizations also have an inherent need for organizational survival. This need, in principle, interferes with their cooperation with others. Students of

the resource mobilization school maintain that organizations resolve this contradiction according to resource pressures, which can shift as new organizations enter the scene or as the overall pool of available resources shrinks or expands. As well, organizations can engage in 'cooperative differentiation', as long as they each have secure access to distinct sources of support. These arguments, however, do not acknowledge that organizations may experience both considerable incentives for cooperation, and resource pressures to differentiate themselves from others. To understand how organizations respond to these circumstances, empirical research is needed in which the level of threats and opportunities, and the behaviour of movement organizations, are examined over time.

The case of the debt cancellation struggle highlights the utility of this approach. It is clear in the Salvadorean case that threats and opportunities are not static, and that their intensification can eventually encourage organizations to unify their policy demands. The Salvadorean case also suggests that the timing of the emergence of new organizations is important. The fact that the Foro's inauguration coincided with the start of the debt campaign meant that it was seeking to establish itself precisely at a time when other factors warranted greater unity within the movement. If the Foro had been created a year earlier, it would undoubtedly have established its own sources of support already, and may have been more willing to collaborate with the ADC when the debt struggle began. Obviously, evidence from additional case studies would be needed to test this hypothesis.

Additional case studies of movement coalitions are needed to shed further light on the question of how and under what circumstances organizations with similar goals minimize competitive behaviour. Such studies should pay close attention to the nature of intra-movement relationships prior to coalition formation. There is a particular need for further research on popular movements in less developed countries, where member contributions are likely to be less important than external donations to sustaining a formal coalition structure. In comparing these movements with those in the First World, an important question concerns whether a greater dependency on donor resources affects the possibilities for sustained solidarity among movement actors.

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Notes

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2. Scholars also examine how the traits of the movement organizations and the nature of their interrelationships with one another influence coalition building. Internal characteristics that are conducive to coalitions include a professionalized SMO structure combined with a less formally structured coalition, and a reliance on lobbying as a tactic of collective action (Shaffer 2000; Staggenborg 1988). Conversely, movement alliances have unraveled due to resource inequalities between the participants, disagreements over appropriate tactics, and differences in movement culture (Arnold 1995; Diaz-Veizades and Chang 1996; Lichterman 1995). But most discussions of endogenous factors focus on how coalitions sustain themselves over the long term. In contrast, the concern of this paper is to understand whether and why organizations begin to cooperate with each other.
3. This information on the PTT sector was presented by Pedro Juan Hernández at a seminar in November 1995 sponsored by, and held at, the Fundación para el Desarrollo Económico (FUNDE), a research institute in San Salvador.
4. The $400 million dollar debt also encompassed several smaller land transfer programs. Passed in 1987, the 'Law of Voluntary Land Transfer' allowed ISTA and FINATA to purchase lands offered for sale by their owners and sell them on soft terms to peasants. This program provided land to just over 6,000 families before it was cancelled in 1989. An additional 1,500 people received land through the July 3rd Accord, an agreement that was reached in response to land invasions conducted by the ADC in 1991 and that became part of the Peace Accords. By 1995, the purchase of 11 properties was finalized under the July 3rd Accord for a total of $4.8 million.
5. The Policy Matrix and its rationale are presented in the Report of the World Bank Mission to El Salvador, 1994, and reiterated in a subsequent World Bank document describing a $50 million loan to revise the cadastre system. This document strongly implies that the loan was to be conditioned on the land liberalization policies (World Bank Loan SV-PA-7147).
6. Eulogio Villalta, interviewed on *Entrevista al Día*, March 28, 1996. ADC leader Eulalio Flores enumerated these and other causes of the cooperatives' credit status at an assembly of almost 200 cooperative members in the department of La Paz, on October 18, 1995. This was one of several regional assemblies held to mobilize participation in the ADC's first debt cancellation march on October 31.
7. ADC leaders articulated this argument at the October 1995 assembly in La Paz.
8. The two research institutes with representation in the Foro leadership were the Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo (FUNDE), and the Centro de Estudios sobre la Aplicación del Derecho (CESPAD).
9. Legal action by the ADC and other organizations led the Supreme Court to halt the implementation of Decree 14. But a new law passed by the Legislative Assembly in June 1996, Decree 719, reiterated much of its content.
10. ADC, 'El Problema Estructural de la Deuda Agraria y Bancaria en El Salvador', September, 1995; ADC Assembly, La Paz, October 18, 1995.
11. ADC Assembly, La Paz, October 18, 1995.
12. *Entrevista al Día*, March 28, 1996.
13. Arias, Manuel, 'ADC rechaza acuerdo sobre deuda agropecuaria,' *CoLatino* March 25, 1996, p. 3. Foro, 'Tribuna Agropecuaria', *CoLatino*, March 28, 1996, p. 11.
14. To cite only one of dozens of news articles in which FMLN legislators criticize the government's plans and support the peasant organizations' demands, Oscar Ortiz is quoted early in the debt campaign, 'If [the government] could assume a commitment for the debt of the financial sector, why can't it do that for the agricultural sector?' Menjívar, Cristian, 'Deuda agraria tecnicamente incobrable,' *La Prensa Gráfica*, Feb. 13, 1996, p. 2-C.
15. Interview with Carlos Rodríguez, May 1996.
16. Interview, October 1996.
17. Confidential interview with FUNDE researcher, March, 1996. This information was sensitive because the interviewee was critical of certain aspects of the project.

18. Reynaldo García's expulsion from the ADC is documented in a letter to ATAES's Junta Directiva, July 14, 1995.
19. February 3, 1996.
20. Interview with Foro leader, May 30, 1996.
21. Foro, 'Memoria de Labores,' February 1997.
22. These included the Party of National Conciliation (PCN), the Liberal Democratic Party (PLD), the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), and the Democratic Convergence (CD).
23. To mention only the print media, FUSADES' position is articulated in Jorge Zablah. T, (President of FUSADES), 'Sobre la Condonación de la Deuda Agraria,' *Prensa Gráfica*, May 16, 1997, unknown page; Cristián Menjívar, 'Tres Propuestas para el Mismo Problema: Polémica por Deuda Agraria,' *Prensa Gráfica*, May 7, 1997, p. 20-A, which also presents the arguments of the FMLN and the PCN; and a full-page announcement in the Prensa Gráfica, 'La Inconstitucionalidad de la Condonación de la Deuda Agraria,' June 19, 1997, p. 9. One *Diario del Mundo* editorial was entitled 'La Deuda que se Perdona la Paga el Pueblo Entero' (precise date and page unknown), and another 'Pueblo no Tiene que Pagar Deuda Agraria' (May 13, 1997, p. 12).
24. Statement by ANTA leader Esperanza Delgado, at an ANTA meeting in Santa Ana, Feb. 24, 1997.
25. Confidential interview, May 12, 1997.
26. Interview with Pedro Juan Hernández, June 20, 2002.
27. Interview, July 16, 2002.
28. Decree 263, called the Ley Especial para Facilitar la Cancelación de las Deudas Agraria y Agropecuaria, was most relevant for cooperative debtors. By the time it was passed, US AID had already donated funds to pay the remaining debt of the PTT sector (Redacción, 'USAID financiará el 30 por ciento de la Deuda del Programa de Transferencia de Tierras,' CoLatino, January 3, 1997, p. 3), while the debts of beneficiaries of Third phase of the Agarian Reform and most others with individual debts were completely exonerated under the special provision for this category of debtor in Decree 699.
29. This fund, called the Fideicomiso Especial para Financiar el Pago de la Deuda Agraria (FEPADA), is administered by the state-owned Banco de Fomento Agropecuario.
30. Interview with Francisco Saldaña, July 16, 2002.

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