Teocinte, El Salvador, October 1989

"NOW WE HAVE CALVES, ONE PAIR OF OXEN, AND WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE TRUCK"

The town of Teocinte is picturesque, peaceful, and shady. Cobblestone streets wind up a steep hill; the village square has a large outspreading tree with a circular cement bench that wraps around the tree trunk. Posters celebrating their first anniversary as a town and declaring their human right to repatriate are everywhere. One sign reads: "Thanks be to God for our sister city that helps us—Arlington."

The three *directiva* members that we met with were Luis, about 45 and with a withered hand, Juan, 25, and Paz, 23 or 25. There are seven members of the *directiva*. The community of about 300 people is organized into two sectors. They wanted to give us a history of their year of resettlement, to tell us about ongoing projects:

In the beginning the construction looked difficult; we were few. We are almost through now. We repaired and built houses, schools, warehouses, and rebuilt the road. We have planted 40 *manzanas* of corn (somewhat over 80 acres). We replaced the church roof that had bullet holes. We feel positive about the water system and about the road. With aid from international solidarity we have 12 cows; now we have calves, one pair of oxen, and we are very grateful for the truck. This truck has helped us overcome a lot of difficulties; it has been an emergency ambulance and hauled food for the community.

We now have a preschool, a kindergarten, and an elementary school. Alice, a North American woman, helps in the school, and we have popular education—that is, the townspeople teach. Currently we have a child care project that needs financial backing. We have the toys but we need the provisions of food for the 55 to 60 children that might attend. We have a health project and an electrical generator project that we will present to CORDES for possible funding.

now in existance!

G.W.

from the book:

GOING HOME

Building Peace in El Salvador:
The Story of Repatriation

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