

Uruguay Reported Using Widespread Torture

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — Military authorities in Uruguay have resorted to widespread torture of political prisoners to help stamp out the Tupamaro guerilla movement, investigators of the International Commission of

Jurists and Amnesty International said Sunday.

"The situation in Uruguay is much worse than most people realize," Niall MacDermot, secretary-general of the commission, told a news conference. He said that the lowest estimate had said 50 percent of the prisoners were tortured. The torturers were described as "invariably hooded to avoid identification."

MacDermot said that among persons arrested and tortured were "doctors who had given or were believed to have given medical aid to Tupamaros."

MacDermot, a Briton, and Inger Fahlander, Swedish research officer for Amnesty International, visited Uruguay with the consent of the government in April and May. The two organizations are nongovernmental associations involved in human rights causes.

Their report issued Sunday, estimates that since July 1972, 3,500 to 4,000 persons have come before investigative authorities and that 1,140 of these still are in custody awaiting trial.

"In addition," the report says, "many other persons have been and continue to be arrested and detained for varying periods without trial."

MacDermot said the torture included the "statue" treatment, in which he said prisoners are forced to stand up for as long as two or three days; the "submarine" treatment — prolonged and repeated ducking, and electric shock to sensitive areas including gold dental fillings, which he called "excessively painful."

"The first session of ill treatment . . . continues until the detainee indicates that he is prepared to make a confes-

sion," the report says. "If he then fails to do so . . . another session of ill treatment occurs before he is re-interrogated and so on, until he confesses."

MacDermot and Miss Fahlander spoke with government ministers, senior legal and military officials, defense lawyers, released prisoners and relatives of prisoners. They said military judges told them that they had received hundreds of complaints of torture but "had not found a single case proved."

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