URUGUAY
DEATHS UNDER TORTURE
1975-77

" If you don't sing we'll take you to the very edge of death. Then we'll pull you back from the edge and then push you back, again and again."

At least 22 people are known to have died under torture in Uruguay between 1972 and 1975 but despite the resulting international outcry the torture of political prisoners continues unabated. The authorities have ignored or refused all appeals for an independent commission of inquiry into serious allegations and evidence of the widespread use of torture.

Presented here are 12 cases of people who died under torture and 5 cases of people who have "disappeared" following arrest or abduction over the past two years. The torture victims are representative of others who have suffered the same fate but about whom there is little information.

Cases of "disappearance" raise important questions. Are these people held in secret detention or have they died at the hands of the Uruguayan police and armed forces? If they are dead, what happened to their bodies? All 17 cases represent those known and unknown prisoners who today suffer similar violations of their most basic human rights.

Amnesty International Publications
10 Southampton Street · London WC2E 7HF · England

"That night (7 February 1976) we suddenly heard O. being taken to an adjoining room where she began to be subjected to the "submarine". The policemen's shouts, the violent questioning in obscene, disgusting language while they counted – 1, 2 . . . 15 . . . 20 – the number of times that they pushed her head into the water, were enraging. . . afterwards the policemen, amongst whom were officers G. and P., raped O. seven times . . . On Sunday 8 February. . . we were beaten senseless. . . It was horrible: the prisoners were dealt blows and electric shocks amidst the desperation of us all. . . On Monday. . . O. was lifted (she could not walk) and taken to a room while I was placed by the door. Infuriating cries began to be heard: the picana eléctrica [electric prod] was being applied to O.'s genitals, her nipples, her mouth and lips. P. was the officer in charge at the time. He seemed to have gone mad, and shouted orders. I was handcuffed, they came and told me that they were torturing my son in front of O. She was shouting something like: "For pity's sake, for pity's sake". I also heard a child crying. It seemed that my son really was there . . . I yelled "Get my son out of there", while time and again the police interrogated me. They themselves said that officer P. had gone mad and that what was being done to O. was incredible . . . [On 15 February] O. was taken again to a floor below . . . We began to hear her desperate cries . . . suddenly a deathly silence made us fear the worst. Indeed a few minutes later we heard an officer telling a superior that O. had stopped breathing and that they were trying to bring her round with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation Fortunately . . . in a while O. came round and they threw her on to a mattress without calling a doctor . . . . "

(Extract of testimony from *Dirección Nacional de Información e Inteligencia)*

Published April 1978 by Amnesty International Publications
10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England
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Original Language: English
AI Index: PUB 84/00/78
Printed by Russell Press Limited, Forest Road West,
Nottingham, England

THE BACKGROUND

In May 1972 Luis Carlos Batalla, 32, died after a few days in detention in the 10th Infantry Battalion barracks at Treinta y Tres. The Uruguayan Congress examined his case and concluded that he had been tortured to death. This was the first – and last – official admission of death under torture in Uruguay.

Amnesty International described the case of Batalla and others who died in custody between 1972 and 1975 in a pamphlet entitled "Tortured to Death in Uruguay: 22 Known Cases" (January 1976). Since the use of torture has not diminished, this pamphlet presents further cases of deaths in detention and "disappearances" since 1975. The list of dead and missing is not complete – it does not include the scores of Uruguayans who have disappeared without trace in neighbouring Argentina in the past few years, where Uruguayans living in exile are victims of persecution from the joint action of Argentinian and Uruguayan security forces. Nor does it present those people about whom little information is obtainable.

Deaths under torture are the most extreme reflection of the gradual erosion of the rule of law in Uruguay during the past ten years. The break from a tradition of peace and legality can be traced back to the late 1950s when economic stagnation and growing social discontent led to the formation of an urban guerilla movement, the Movement of National Liberation (MLN) or *Tupamaros*. Torture began to be used as a method of interrogation by police and, on a much larger scale, by the armed forces after they were brought in to combat the armed opposition in 1971.

The MLN-*Tupamaros* movement was soon crushed but the ruthless methods and the practice of torture remained to become part of the system of government. Instead of returning to barracks, the armed forces took over the political arena. Uruguay gradually became *de facto* a military dictatorship despite having a nominated civilian president. In 1973 Congress was dissolved, most political parties and groups were banned, their newspapers closed, the national trade union movement outlawed and political and trade union leaders imprisoned.

To the new rulers, peaceful dissent and any political or trade union activity have become synonymous with "subversion". The methods first applied to suspected members of a violent opposition group had by 1975 become routine treatment for virtually any peaceful opponent of the Government who fell into the hands of military

units. Since then police quarters and military barracks, as well as the overcrowded regular prisons, have been filled with detainees denied their basic legal rights. Torture victims come from all walks of life: workers, trade union leaders, students, teachers, doctors, lawyers and ex-parliamentarians.

The most common forms of torture are:

BLINDFOLDING or hooding.
SEVERE BEATINGS
PLANTON – prolonged standing in a fixed position.
SUBMARINO – submersion, often in filthy water or excrement until nearly drowned.
PAU DE ARARA – parrot's perch – suspension by the wrists or by the arms and knees from a bar.
PICANA ELECTRICA – the electric prod – the delivery of electric shocks especially to the most sensitive parts of the body.

Torture takes place within a system that no longer provides either legal safeguards or remedies for the victims. Arrests are made without a written warrant and are generally followed by a period of detention incommunicado for weeks or months, in violation of the Uruguayan Constitution. The members of the military tribunals who judge all cases of people detained for political or trade union activities are neither legally competent nor independent from the executive power. There is no free press nor is there an elected legislature to take up questions of abuses of authority by law enforcement agencies. In effect anyone protesting or reporting torture or other illegal treatment of detainees commits an offence under the new draconian security laws. Trial is by military court and prison sentences are heavy.

In cases of deaths under torture, the families of victims have often been forbidden to open the coffin under threat of reprisals. Official medical certificates which have been issued are made meaningless, in some cases, by their failure to note physical injuries or to explain the cause of the diagnosed "sudden heart attack", "acute stress" or "lung oedema".

The failure of the Uruguayan Government to take steps to halt the illegal and inhuman practice of torture and to provide effective internal remedies for the victims and their families has continued to be a matter for grave international concern. Despite the international outcry and despite having ratified the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, the Uruguayan Government still ignores or refuses all requests for an independent inquiry into allegations of torture and evidence of widespread violations of human rights.

DEATHS UNDER TORTURE

"On one occasion they brought a prisoner back from his torture session and left him lying on the floor by 'X'. He lay complaining for nearly twenty-four hours about his nose bleeding. He kept saying that he was choking on the blood he was swallowing. He asked to be seen by a doctor but no one came to treat him. His voice gradually became weaker until eventually he died from loss of blood. Only then was his body taken away."

(Extract of testimony from the *Dirección Nacional de Información e Inteligencia Departamento No. 2*)

Carlos María ARGENTA ESTABLE – Died 13 December 1975

A retired dockworker. Aged 64, married. When arrested on 9 December he was not in good health having previously suffered a heart attack. Despite this, he is reported to have been tortured at the *Dirección Nacional de Información e Inteligencia* and at the barracks of the *Regimiento de Infantería No. 3*. A government reply to the International Labour Organization stated that he died on 13 December 1975 from meningitis and pleurisy.

Juan LOPEZ – Died January 1976

Aged 53, married, a Montevideo taxi driver. He was arrested on 31 December 1975 at his home on the outskirts of the capital. On 5 January 1976, the "combined forces" (police and military) asked his wife to collect his body which was handed over in a sealed coffin. The family were ordered not to open it and the funeral wake was only allowed to be a few hours long. Several plain-clothes police agents are reported to have attended the funeral and wake.

Other detainees reported seeing Sr Lopez with his head bandaged. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS inquired into Sr Lopez's death in custody. The authorities' reply, dated 26 August 1977, quoted the autopsy report requested by the military judge, giving the cause of death as multiple contusions and extreme haemorrhaging.

Death was claimed to be the result of injuries sustained when Sr Lopez "made a brusque movement to get away from a guard who was taking him to the bathroom". He lost his balance and fell, first against the bannister and then against the steps of the staircase. He was dead on arrival at the medical centre, although the reply does not specify to which medical unit he was taken. The military judge decided not to pursue the investigation and closed the case.

Oscar Eduardo Bonifacio OLIVERA ROSANO – Died February 1976
Aged 56, a metalworker at the CINOCA factory, he was arrested under *Medidas Prontas de Seguridad* (Emergency Legislation) on 3 January 1976. It is reported that he died at the *Dirección Nacional de Información e Inteligencia No. 6* in Montevideo and that his body was delivered to his family in a sealed coffin. Defying an order not to open the coffin, his relatives found his face covered with injuries and his body bandaged from the waist down. According to the Uruguayan Government's official reply to the International Labour Organization, Sr Olivera died in his place of detention. The medical report established that he died of haemorrhaging from a bullet wound caused by the carelessness of one of the guards who was later committed for trial.

Ivo FERNANDEZ – Died February 1976
A dockworker and trade union leader in the town of Paysandú. He is reported to have died as a result of torture at the *Batallón de Caballería No. 4* in the town of Artigas in February 1976.

Eduardo MONDELLO TECHERA – Died March 1976
Aged 30, a photographer from a well-known family in Piriapolis, he was an active supporter of the Uruguayan Socialist Party. Arrested with his father on 6 March 1976 in his home town, he is reported to have died in the Maritime Hospital of *Punta Ballena*. On 10 March, his body was delivered to his family with express orders against opening the coffin. Defying the order, his friends and relatives observed numerous injuries caused by torture and drew the conclusion that these wounds were the cause of death. Their request for an autopsy is reported to have been refused.

Nicanor ALDABALDE – Died March 1976
Aged 65, a cattle auctioneer from Lavalleja. Not politically active himself, but a friend of Eduardo Mondello's family (see above), he went to the military barracks where the latter was detained for information about his arrest. There he was given the *plantón* torture (prolonged standing) and died from a heart attack. Some sources also allege that he was given the *submarino* (near drowning) torture.

Nuble YIC – Died March 1976
Aged 52, a worker at the frozen meat packing factory EFCSA. He was arrested at dawn on 21 October 1975, while still convalescing from a heart attack. For almost five months his family were unable to obtain any information about his situation until they were

allowed to visit him at the military establishment *Escuela de Armas y Servicios*, Montevideo, in early March 1976. At the second visit, which took place in a barracks in the presence of more than ten other detainees, their relatives and the guards, it is reported that Nuble Yic shouted that everyone should know that prisoners were being tortured and killed there and that he did not want his wife alone to be responsible for this information. He then described, still shouting, how he had endured four months of electric shock torture, submersion of his head under water and excrement for prolonged periods, suspension by his feet or hands for long periods, and had sharp objects forced under his nails. He also stated that he could not last any longer because his heart condition had returned. The following day, 14 March, a military lorry under heavily armed guard delivered the coffin containing Nuble's body to his wife. Nuble Yic is also mentioned in a testimony received by Amnesty International in this way: "Soon after, someone else cut the ropes and the men fell to the ground. I can imagine the pain they were in. After being suspended like this for hours on end, all your blood runs to your arms and legs and to be dropped suddenly is agony. After falling, they were motionless. Yic, the man from Cerro, died. This was his last torture. His wife saw him in the barracks after the incommunicado order was repealed. In front of the guards and other detainees, he shouted out to everyone how he had suffered and had been tortured. Afterwards, he was taken back to *El Infierno* (Hell), where he died, suspended above dogs. This was his final torture. He entered *El Infierno* and he left it in the same way, SILENT. Despite the prohibition against opening the coffin, those who did saw his blackened legs and torn body."

Silvina SALDANA – Died June 1976
Aged 28, from a poor family in Salto, she studied in Montevideo, paying for her studies by doing domestic work. Arrested in February 1976, she died as a result of torture in June 1976 whilst still in detention incommunicado in a military barracks. She is reported to have suffered particularly severe torture for refusing to say anything but her name during interrogation. Around 20 June her body was delivered to a family for whom Silvina had done domestic work but since she was not a relative, the body was not accepted. It is not known what subsequently happened to Silvina Saldana's body.

Raul FACIO – Died December 1976
A sugar industry worker and a trade union leader from Bella Union. He was arrested in 1976 and is reported to have been tortured to

death in a military barracks in Artigas. On 16 or 17 December 1976 his father was called to the barracks to collect his body. This showed signs of severe torture – head wounds and the chest crushed in the region of the sternum. When his father asked for an explanation, he was told that Raul "did not withstand the interrogation". Some sources refer to military officials as bragging in front of the families of Raul Facio and Professor Porta (see below) of having killed them. The family was ordered not to open the coffin.

Dante PORTA – Died December 1976
A well-known teacher, he was arrested in December 1976 in the *departamento* of Artigas and is reported to have died as a result of torture in a military barracks there. The coffin containing his body was delivered to his family with the express order that it should not be opened. At the same time a medical certificate was issued, stating that his death had been due to a heart attack.

Humberto PASCARETTA – Died June 1977
An employee at the National Energy and Telephone Board (UTE), he was arrested early in May 1977 and died in detention in a military barracks. His body was delivered to his family on 4 June 1977.

Hugo PEREYRA – Died August 1977
Aged 54, a building worker and trade unionist, he was committed for trial in mid 1977 for trade union activity. He had been arrested at the end of 1975 and is reported to have been severely tortured at the *Batallón de Blindados No.13.* At the time of his death he was detained at the barracks of *La Paloma* in El Cerro, Montevideo. His body was delivered to his family on 28 August 1977 – his head showed various injuries and there was a gash across his stomach. The Combined Forces gave cerebral embolism as the cause of death.

"The first time they took me to be interrogated they told me: 'If you don't sing [talk] we'll take you to the very edge of death. Then we'll pull you back from the edge and then push you back, again and again. If we overdo it we'll put you in a nylon bag and throw you in the Cementerio del Norte.' The background music to this speech, apart from the radios playing at full blast, was the screams of those being tortured in the adjoining rooms. At the end of the month I had to sign a declaration saying I had not been subjected to physical duress."
(Extract of testimony from the *Batallón de Infantería No. 13)*

"DISAPPEARANCES"

In the following three cases no bodies have been found as definite evidence of death. However, the circumstances of their "disappearance" and the lack, or conflicting nature, of official information provides strong circumstantial evidence that they died in detention and that their bodies have been disposed of. The other but less likely alternative is that they are still held in secret detention. These cases also serve as examples and illustrations of other "disappeared" people about whom less information is available.

Eduardo BLEIER

Aged 47, odontologist, married with four children, he was arrested on 28 October 1975, held incommunicado and tortured for several months. He was later interned in the Hospital of the Armed Forces for treatment for a heart attack and related illnesses. He was reported by another detainee to be in a military barracks looking like a corpse and as if he were drugged. His family had no news of him until he had been interned in the military hospital for over two months.
After his discharge he is reported to have been taken to the barracks of the *Batallón de Infantería No. 13* in Montevideo. One testimony from this time states that: "One day they lined us all up and called out Eduardo Bleier's name. He stepped forward and was pushed into a hole. The others were forced to cover him with earth and to flatten it. They refused; some went berserk. They attacked us madly. Eduardo Bleier was picked up dying and taken to hospital. We never heard of him again."

Fernando MIRANDA

Aged 45, married with three children, Dr Miranda was a distinguished jurist, notary and Professor of the Faculty of Law at Montevideo University. Until 1973 he was secretary of the National Election Board. Dr Miranda was arrested on 30 November 1975 and has not been heard of since. All efforts by his family and by national and international jurists to establish his whereabouts have been in vain. Repeated requests for information from the Uruguayan Council of State (legislative body) to the Executive Power only obtained the reply that he was not in any military or police establishment. Unofficially his family was told that he had travelled to Argentina in August 1975. However, he was active in his work and public duties after that date. It is generally believed in Uruguay that Dr Miranda died in detention and that his body has been disposed of.

Julio ESCUDERO MATTOS

Aged 33, bank employee and teacher of mathematics. He has been missing since 11 March 1976. On that day his house was raided by a unit of FUSNA (Marines) who said they were looking for Julio Escudero, alleging that he was a member of the Communist Party. As Sr Escudero was not at home, four soldiers remained there for four days. In the middle of the night of 15 March, three plain-clothes agents questioned Sr Escudero's wife about her husband and told the soldiers to remain there for a month. They left, however, two days later.

On 9 January 1977 two men who identified themselves as plain-clothes policemen, searched Sr Escudero's house and took away some identity papers, a photograph and some philosophy books which they said were subversive. Sra Escudero then began the agonising task undertaken by families of political prisoners of visiting every military barracks in an attempt to locate a missing relative and have his arrest officially acknowledged. Finally, in the army unit *División de Ejército No. 1* she was told that her husband had travelled to Buenos Aires, but not when the supposed journey had taken place.

The wife of another political prisoner states that Julio Escudero was detained at least from November 1976 in the barracks of anti-aircraft artillery battilion No. 1 in the Paloma district of Montevideo.

Elena QUINTEROS ALMEIDA de DIAZ

Aged 32, a teacher, she had suffered earlier brief arrests in Uruguay for political and trade union activities. She is reported to have been arrested again on 24 June 1976. Four days later she was walking in a street of Montevideo, followed at a distance by police agents. It is reported that she was freed in order to lead to the arrest of another person. Suddenly she ran into a garden adjacent to that of the Venezuelan Embassy, jumped the garden wall crying her name and the words "asylum, asylum". The plain-clothes police entered the Embassy garden and started dragging her by the hair towards the street. Two Embassy officals ran to her aid and were themselves beaten by the police. Elena Quinteros was forced into a green Volkswagen and has never been seen again. On 13 July 1976 her husband José Felix Diaz, who was living in exile in Buenos Aires, was also abducted by security forces or by so-called death squads. As a result of the violation of Embassy territory the Government of Venezuela broke off diplomatic relations with Uruguay. The Uruguayan Government denied that security forces were involved in the abduction and claimed that Elena Quinteros had left the country

in January 1975. Although people in the Embassy who witnessed the abduction identified some of the policemen involved, there has been no official recognition of her arrest.

Julio CASTRO

Aged 68, a well-known educationalist, UNESCO expert on literacy training, journalist and deputy editor of the weekly *Marcha*. When arrested on 1 August 1977 he was suffering from a heart ailment, details of which his family gave to the police on the day of his disappearance. Since then there has been no trace of either Julio Castro or the van in which he left home on that day. On 28 September the authorities published an official communiqué about his disappearance and urged the public to help establish his whereabouts. Shortly afterwards, the authorities gave the information that Julio Castro had travelled to Buenos Aires on 22 September by the state airline, *Pluna*. Apart from the strange circumstance that a well-known Uruguayan personality who had disappeared almost two months earlier, could then leave the country unnoticed, the Argentinian Government stated in reply to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) on 10 December 1977 that Julio Castro's name did appear on the passenger list but that he never boarded the plane at Montevideo Airport and that "in consequence, his entry in Argentina is not registered on that date, nor on any later date."

On 2 January 1978, the Argentinian Government changed their earlier statement to the IACHR and confirmed that Julio Castro did appear on the list of arrivals on the flight and date mentioned. They also explained that there is no other document to confirm his arrival, since Uruguayan citizens travelling from their country of origin do not need disembarcation cards.

It is generally believed in Uruguay that Julio Castro died in detention and that his body has been disposed of.

THE CASE OF ALVARO BALBI

Alvaro Balbi's case, which was featured in "Tortured to Death in Uruguay – 22 known cases" was submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Aged 32, a student of medicine, he was married with four children and another about to be born. He was a business employee, an amateur musician and a member of the Communist Party. Arrested with other workers during a meeting on 29 July 1975, he was reportedly taken to the offices of the police intelligence services in Maldonado Street (*Dirección de Información e Inteligencia No. 6 de la Policía*, Calle Maldonado), in Montevideo, a known torture centre. His wife tried unsuccessfully to establish his whereabouts. Two days later, 31 July, his body was delivered with the official explanation that he had suffered an asthma attack. However, the signs of torture were evident – fractures, liver rupture, burns and multiple bruises. There are indications that he died under the "submarine" torture. When his wife went to the police intelligence centre on 30 July, officials denied knowledge of the arrest. However, the estimated time of death indicates that Sr Balbi was not only there at that time but that he had already died.

Sr Balbi was the son of Selmar Balbi, a well-known teacher, union leader and former member of the central committee of the Communist Party. Although nothing was published in the local media about the case, a moving letter from Sr Selmar Balbi, appealing to President Bordaberry to redress these practices, was widely circulated. Sr Selmar Balbi has also filed a complaint at a civil court. However, the case was transferred to military jurisdiction, which suggests an attempt to silence the case. The military judge (*Juez Militar de Instrucción de 1er Turno*) is also in charge of the proceedings against the group of workers arrested together with Alvaro Balbi; they are possible witnesses to his death.

Following examination of the information on the case supplied by Amnesty International and the Uruguayan Government, the IACHR passed the following Resolution in November 1977:

It is resolved:

1. Pursuant to Article 51 of the Rules of Procedure, the facts which form part of the report relating to the death of Sr. Balbi are presumed to be true, namely:
   "The body of Alvaro Balbi showed outward clear marks of violence."
2. There are strong indications that Sr Balbi who was detained by the authorities and was found dead after two days in prison died as a result of the violent acts which the Commission presumes to have taken place.
3. To point out to the Government of Uruguay that such acts are very serious violations of the right to life, liberty and the security and dignity of person (Article 1 of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man); of the right to justice (Article XVIII) and the right to a fair trial (Article XXVI).
4. To recommend to the Government:
   (a) that the Government should organize a full and impartial investigation to determine the perpetrator of the reported acts in accordance with Uruguayan Law and that it should punish those responsible.
   (b) that it should inform the Commission of the measures taken to enforce the recommendations of paragraph (a) within 30 days.
5. To notify the Government of Uruguay and the complainant of this resolution.
6. If, at the end of 30 days the Government has not notified the Commission of the measures adopted to carry out the investigation in paragraph 4 this resolution will be included in the Annual Report to the General Assembly of the OAS (Article 9 (*bis*) Section C iii of the Statute).

RESOLUTION ON CASE 1967 URUGUAY

(Original text in Spanish: translation by Amnesty International)

On 15th December 1977 the Uruguayan Government replied rejecting the competence of the IACHR in this case and pleaded reasons of national security for not providing the requested information regarding Sr Balbi's death in custody.

In January 1978 the Organization of American States voted against accepting a Government offer to hold their General Assembly in Uruguay. Among the reasons for the negative vote were "violations of Human Rights" and "lack of guarantees".

PEOPLE WHO DIED UNDER TORTURE

NAME	ARREST	DEATH
Luis Carlos Batalla	20 May 1972	25 May 1972
Edison Marin		3 June 1972
Hector Lorenzo Jurado Avellaneda		15 July 1972
Carlos Alvariza	5 June 1972	23 July 1972
Roberto Gomensoro	11 March 1973	12 March 1973
Oscar Felipe Fernandez Mendieta		25 May 1973
Gerardo Alter		22 August 1973
Walter Hugo Arteche		22 August 1973
Hugo Leonardo de los Santos Mendoza		September 1973
Gilberto Coghlan		19 December 1973
Aldo Perrini Guala		5 March 1974
Laura Raggio		21 April 1974
Silvia Reyes		21 April 1974
Alberto Blanco		21 April 1974
Nibya Sabalsagaray	29 June 1974	29 June 1974
Anselmo García		12 August 1974
Horacio Mujica		November 1974
Ivan Morales	20 November 1974	22 November 1974
Amelia Lavagna de Tizze	28 April 1975	29 April 1975
Alvaro Balbi	29 July 1975	30 July 1975
Carlos Curuchaga	10 July 1975	26 September 1975
Pedro Ricardo Lerena Martinez	25 May 1975	29 September 1975
Carlos María Argenta Estable	9 December 1975	13 December 1975
Juan Lopez	31 December 1975	January 1976
Oscar Eduardo Bonifacio Olivera Rosano	3 January 1976	February 1976
Ivo Fernandez		February 1976
Eduardo Mondello Techera	6 March 1976	March 1976
Nicanor Aldabalde	March 1976	March 1976
Nuble Yic	21 October 1975	March 1976
Silvina Saldaña	February 1976	June 1976
Raul Facio	1976	December 1976
Dante Porta	December 1976	December 1976
Humberto Pascaretta	May 1977	June 1977
Hugo Pereyra	End 1975	August 1977

PEOPLE WHO HAVE "DISAPPEARED"

Eduardo Bleier	October 1975
Fernando Miranda	November 1975
Julio Escudero Mattos	March 1976
Elena Quinteros Almeida de Diaz	June 1976
Julio Castro	August 1977

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is a worldwide human rights movement which is independent of any government, political faction, ideology, economic interest or religious creed. It works for the release of men and women imprisoned anywhere for their beliefs, colour, ethnic origin, sex, language or religion, provided they have neither used nor advocated violence. These are termed "prisoners of conscience".

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL opposes torture and the death penalty in all cases and without reservation. It advocates fair and early trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of persons detained without charge or without trial and those detained after expiry of their sentences.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL seeks observance throughout the world of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has 2,000 adoption groups and national sections in 35 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North America and Latin America and individual members in a further 74 countries. Each adoption group works for at least two prisoners of conscience in countries other than its own. These countries are balanced geographically and politically to ensure impartiality. Information about prisoners and human rights violations emanates from Amnesty International's Research Department in London.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC), UNESCO and the Council of Europe, has cooperative relations with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, and has observer status with the Organization of African Unity (Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees).

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is financed by subscriptions and donations of its worldwide membership. To safeguard the independence of the organization, all contributions are strictly controlled by guidelines laid down by AI's International Council, and income and expenditure are made public in an annual financial report.

Covenant of Civil and Political Rights. Article 7.
Ratified by Uruguay 1 April 1970

"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Uruguayan Constitution. Article 26.

"In no case shall brutal treatment be allowed in prisons."

United Nations Declaration on Torture December 1975

Article 8

Any person who alleges that he has been subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment by or at the instigation of a public official shall have the right to complain to, and have his case impartially examined by, the competent authorities of the State concerned.

Article 9

Whenever there is reasonable ground to believe that an act of torture as defined in Article 1 has been committed, the competent authorities of the State concerned shall promptly proceed to an impartial investigation even if there has been no formal complaint.

JOIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO ALL ALLEGATIONS OF THE TORTURE OF POLITICAL DETAINEES AND TO CLARIFY THE FATE OF THOSE WHO ARE MISSING.

Please send letters or telegrams to:

Dr Aparicio Mendez,
Presidente de la República Oriental del Uruguay,
Montevideo.

and/or

The Uruguayan Embassy in your country.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is an international Human Rights organization which campaigns for the release of all Prisoners of Conscience.