

**URGENT
ACTION**

**amnesty
international**

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International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England

Amnesty International opposes by all appropriate means the imposition and infliction of death penalties and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of prisoners or other detained or restricted persons whether or not they have used or advocated violence.
(Amnesty International Statute, Article 1(c))

EXTERNAL (for
general distribution)

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"Disappearance"

28 April 1981

EL SALVADOR: Father Roy BOURGEOIS
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Father Roy Bourgeois, a Maryknoll priest, had travelled to El Salvador as a translator for a CBS (American broadcasting company) film crew. On the morning of 26 April 1981 he attended mass given by Archbishop Rivera y Damas, with at least one other crew member. Father Bourgeois left the mass early and returned to the Hotel Camino Real. He left the hotel at 10.30 am saying that he would return in thirty minutes. Nothing has been heard of him since.

Amnesty International fears that he may have been abducted by the Salvadorian security services and that he may be tortured and killed.

Amnesty International has received reports of the abduction of several journalists in El Salvador. On 15 January 1981 nine staff members of the newspaper *El Independiente*, including journalists Vida Cuadra and Francisco Ramirez Avila, were taken from the newspaper's office by troops. Francisco Ramirez Avila is now known to be held in Santa Tecla prison in San Salvador; the whereabouts of the others are still unknown. Foreign journalists have also been abducted. On 28 December 1980 journalist John Sullivan, a United States citizen, disappeared from his hotel in San Salvador and has not been seen since. On 12 January 1981 a Venezuelan film director, Nelson Arrieta, was abducted from his hotel by plainclothed members of the security forces. He was released on 18 January and testified that he had been taken to a military barracks where, during interrogation, he was beaten and given drugs by the security services which made him lose consciousness.

Thousands of Salvadorians have been killed during the past year. The government attributes the deaths to murder by unofficial groups or to fighting between government and guerrilla forces. However, Amnesty International has accumulated unequivocal evidence that there is a consistent pattern of killing by the security services of peasants, young people and other victims who have not been involved in guerrilla activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

A limited number of appeals is requested; please send about half the number of appeals that you would normally send.

Telegrams/express letters urging the Salvadorian authorities to explain the abduction of Father Roy Bourgeois, and to do everything possible to ensure his physical safety and his immediate release from detention.

Telegrams would be particularly helpful in this case.

APPEALS TO:

Ing. José Napoleón Duarte
Presidente de la Junta de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador

(President)

OR

Coronel José Guillermo García
Ministro de Defensa y de Seguridad Pública
Ministerio de Defensa y de Seguridad Pública
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Minister of Defence and Public Security)

OR

Dr Fidel Chávez Mena
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
San Salvador, El Salvador

(Minister of Foreign Affairs)

FINAL DATE FOR ACTION: 19 May 1981

- Please take immediate action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action-appeal. Carefully read the Recommended Action.
- Letters and telegrams should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to the relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
 - Article 3, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person";
 - Article 5, "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment";
 - Article 9, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile".
- The name of Amnesty International can be used unless stated otherwise; although, letters written in a private or professional capacity may be more effective.

- Information about the alleged connection of any person with an organization which is banned in their country is provided as background only and should not be included in appeals.
- In Urgent Action cases, where Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the possible ill-treatment of prisoners, appeals are issued when the circumstances of a person's arrest or disappearance make such treatment likely. Do not make direct accusations and, unless otherwise instructed, do not use the word "torture".
- Send at least one telegram or express letter immediately. Other letters can be sent afterwards to the addresses listed. Copies of letters should be sent to the relevant diplomatic representatives in your country. Copies of any replies received should be sent immediately to the International Secretariat, or to your national section or Urgent Action coordinator. Thank the official who has replied, requesting that you be kept informed about the case.