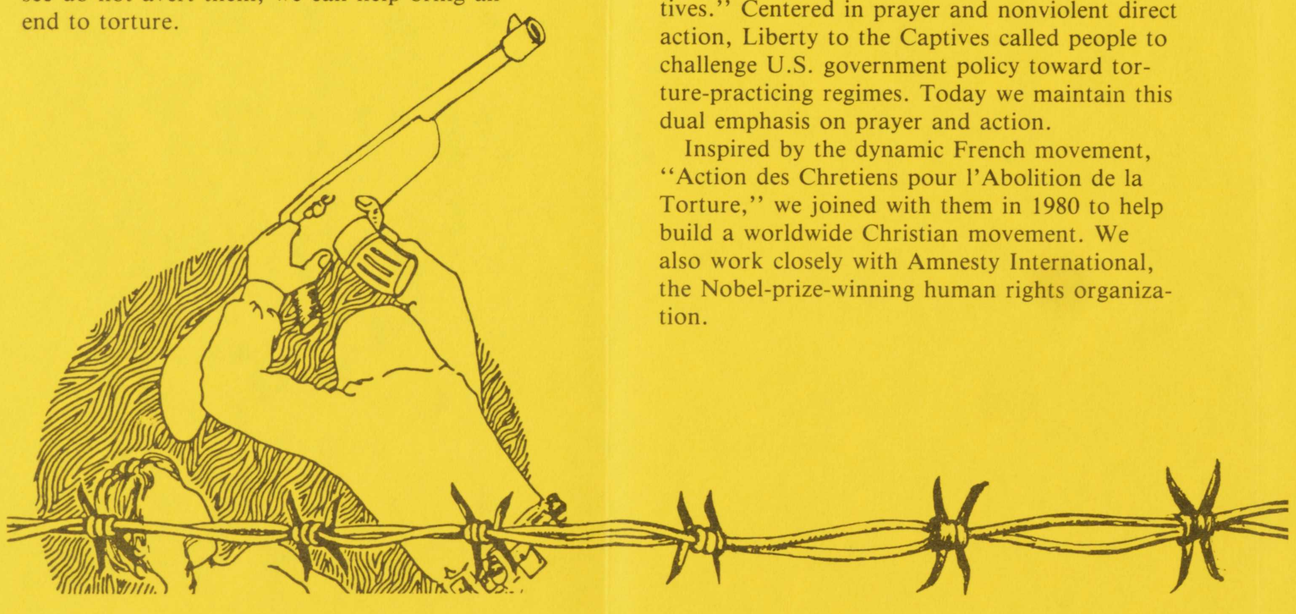
A knock in the middle of the night. An unexpected road block. A muffled scream. These are the moments constantly feared—signals that someone else will have "disappeared". Someone else might be suffering the inhumanity of torture at the hands of another human being.

Millions of people are living in countries where the way of death has become a way of life. Torture—the systematic use of physical and mental brutality as a means of controlling a population—is increasing at an alarming rate in both its incidence and sophistication. Governments in both the East and West have created a climate of terror as a means of staying in power. In Guatemala, Iran, the Philippines, El Salvador, the Soviet Union, South Korea, Turkey and over one-third of the world's countries the scandal of torture continues. The people are well aware of "the grill," the clubs, the hypodermic needles, the electric batons, and other weapons of torture. The screams which go unheard silence them.

Torture is an ugly and evil reality in our world. The atrocity of it makes it hard to believe. It is something we would rather avoid. Yet it must be stopped. If we who have eyes to see do not avert them, we can help bring an end to torture.



A call to respond

"Remember those in prison as if you were there with them; and those who are being maltreated, for you, like them, are still in the world." (Hebrews 13:3)

The Christian community worships one who died a torturous death. Jesus of Nazareth, in anguished love, identified with human suffering when he submitted himself to the cruelty of a military government. His compassion and solidarity moves us. As He continues to be crucified again and again in torture chambers around the world, we who are called by his name must cry out on behalf of those who are suffering. They are indeed our brothers and sisters.

Who we are

American Christians for the Abolition of Torture (ACAT) is an ecumenical Christian group working to expose the reality of torture and to help bring an end to its use. We began in Philadelphia in 1975 as "Liberty to the Captives." Centered in prayer and nonviolent direct action, Liberty to the Captives called people to challenge U.S. government policy toward torture-practicing regimes. Today we maintain this dual emphasis on prayer and action.

Inspired by the dynamic French movement, "Action des Chretiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture," we joined with them in 1980 to help build a worldwide Christian movement. We also work closely with Amnesty International, the Nobel-prize-winning human rights organization.

ACAT is working to make the Church aware of the international human rights situation. We develop **educational and liturgical resources** not only to help our membership to stay informed, but to help them to educate others. We also provide ideas and organization for **local "actions"** (public worship and witness) which express solidarity with the victims of repression. Together with our membership we speak out as their **advocates** to oppressive governments around the world, and we encourage others—such as official church bodies and our representatives—to do so.

In working against torture, it is always prayer which sustains our compassion and nurtures our solidarity with those who are suffering. It is the one place where all cries are known, and all voices are heard.

Join us!

We hope that you will consider joining with us in the important task of abolishing torture. You may join as an individual, family, fellowship or congregation. (The basic membership is $20 for an individual and $100 as a "Covenant Congregation.") As a member, you will commit yourself to both **pray regularly** and **act** on behalf of the victims of torture. ACAT has a number of resources which will support you in your concern and action:

continued on last panel

Yes, *I want to work to abolish torture by joining American Christians for the Abolition of Torture.*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone ( ) _____

Enclosed are my membership dues of:

____ Regular: $20* ____ Family: $30 ____ Sponsoring: $50 or more ____ Congregation: $100 or more

Enclosed is an additional contribution to support ACAT's work: $ _____.

*If you have a limited income and cannot afford $20, ACAT will accept what you can afford as your membership fee.

Please make checks payable to "American Christians for the Abolition of Torture." Send with the above form to ACAT, 6117 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144. 215-849-7450.