

Mother Jones reporter is tortured in Colombia

(ANS/CUP) A reporter for **Mother Jones** magazine alleges he was tortured continuously over a five-day period by Columbia army officials following his arrest in August at the Bogota Airport in Colombia.

Thirty-two year old Lawrence Johnson arrived back in San Francisco three weeks after his arrest. He said he had asked American Embassy officials, who were instrumental in obtaining his release, to conceal

the fact of his torture until he left Colombia because he feared "it was the only way they would let me out of the country."

The veteran free-lance journalist was arrested August 6 at the Bogota airport as he was about to return to the United States, after security police found photos of armed leftist guerillas in his luggage. Johnson maintained that the photos were taken in connection with a legitimate story he was doing on

the guerilla movement in Colombia. His release was arranged by the American embassy in Bogota after he proved his interviews were strictly on a professional basis.

Johnson said he was beaten for 48 hours with a mask tied over his head, that army officers used lighted cigarettes on various areas of his body, and that he was threatened with execution during the torture sessions.

He also says a Colombian friend of his was tortured in front of him with electric shocks to his genitals, in efforts to force Johnson to give names of the guerillas he had interviewed. Johnson reports his interviews were conducted with intermediaries, and that he had no names to give.

The **Mother Jones** correspondent said his torturers bragged that as long as President Reagan continued his policy of supporting dictatorships, they had nothing to worry about. The U.S. reportedly will give the Colombian government \$125 million next year.

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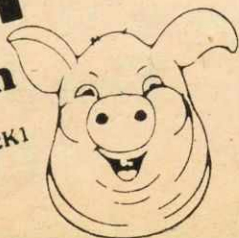
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Gays are ignored on U.S. Census records

(ZNS/CUP) Top officials with the U.S. Census bureau say they have decided not to tabulate households with same-sex "partners" because the results might be embarrassing to the government.

1980 was the first year that householders across the U.S. were given the opportunity to identify an intimate relationship with another person in the home as a "partner" rather than merely as a "roommate." The move reportedly was designed to gauge how many unmarried heterosexual couples were living together.

However, the census bureau says it will not take into consid-

eration the fact that many gay couples may also have listed themselves as "partners", instead of "roommates." An unnamed top level census official says if these figures were tabulated, they would be too "controversial" as well as "embarrassing" to policy makers who use census figures in formulas for a wide variety of federal and state programs.

The official added that the U.S. Government is simply not willing to bear the cost of tabulating information on gay households. The same information on unmarried heterosexuals, however, has already been computed.