

No. 8159

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION ON SALVADORAN REFUGEES

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, Salvadoran men, women and children, fleeing persecution, torture and death in their civil war-torn homeland, are seeking political asylum in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported that the U.S. Department of State has presently opted for a strict, narrow interpretation of U.S. political asylum laws; and

WHEREAS, Salvadorans incarcerated at U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service detention centers are likely to return to El Salvador "voluntarily" because they cannot afford a lawyer or bail, or because of alleged physical and psychological intimidation by INS officers; and

WHEREAS, Salvadorans are deported each week by the government of the United States and handed over to the custody of the National Guard of El Salvador, which reportedly has tortured and executed some returned refugees;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Anaheim, California, July 31-August 5, 1981, call upon the government of the United States to immediately stop its deportation of Salvadoran refugees, to facilitate their due process rights in applying for political asylum, and to release detainees on their own recognizance following their application for asylum; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Congress of the United States be urged to investigate alleged violations of the human rights of Salvadoran detainees, including physical abuse and psychological mistreatment by the Immigration and Naturalization Service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations and members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be informed of this urgent situation and be urged to support ecumenical efforts to aid Salvadoran refugees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) send copies of this resolution to the President, Secretary of State, Attorney General and appropriate committees of the Congress of the United States, and urge that immediate action be taken on its request; and further, that he communicate in appropriate and expeditious ways about these urgent concerns with agencies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and with other religious bodies encouraging their partnership in this humanitarian effort.