

Political prisoners recall horrors of torture, beatings

AMNESTY, from 1D

All, she said, simply to find out what she knew about opposition to the Augusto Pinochet regime among her friends and colleagues. "They never know what people might know," she said, "so they torture them to find out."

Mrs. DeNegri said imprisonment, torture and execution are still common in Pinochet's Chile — and are unlikely to end as long as the United States offers financial and political support for the regime. Now working as a youth counselor in Rockville, she has not applied for U.S. citizenship and hopes to return to Chile some day.

Fluent in English, host of several English-teaching programs on radio and television, Mr. Neou was a natural target of the murderous Khmer Rouge.

He survived by pretending to be an uneducated laborer, working in the fields on starvation rations until a guard happened to hear him mutter a few words of English. He was jailed, beaten with bamboo sticks and accused of working for the CIA, he said.

But he claimed — falsely — that he had been a taxi driver and had picked up just a few words of English from customers. And he won the admiration of his young captors by telling them the folk stories he had learned for his old radio shows.

Mr. Neou escaped to Thailand in 1979 and came to the United States in 1981. In an ironic twist, he said with a smile, he now supports his family in Washington by working as a cab driver.