



A Center for Christian Ministry
at University of Illinois at Chicago

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UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY
American Baptist Churches
Christian Church (Disciples)
Church of the Brethren
Presbyterian Church, USA
United Church of Christ
United Methodist Church

December 9, 2002

Mr. Hipolito Acosta
District Director
Immigration and Naturalization Service
126 Northpoint Drive
Houston, TX 77060

Mr. Acosta,

I am deeply concerned by the INS detention of Mr. Roger Calero on December 3, 2002 at Houston Intercontinental Airport. Mr. Calero is a journalist and a permanent resident of the USA married to a US citizen. His work has taken him through out Latin America for many years. Your detention of Mr. Calero is a direct threat to many of the basic rights and freedoms that are essential to the United States of America that you are sworn to protect: freedom of the press, freedom to travel, freedom of political and religious beliefs. To attempt to justify your actions by citing a 14 year old case that took place when Mr. Calero was a high school student raises even more questions about your detention of Mr. Calero. It raises fundamental questions about your truthfulness, and your real motivation for holding Mr. Calero.

As a minister of the Christian Church that has served as a missionary in Latin America and takes mission teams there every year, I am especially concerned about the detention of Mr. Calero because of the implications it has for the Church. The mission work of the church depends upon the ability to move freely in and out of the USA. Many of our religious communities have members from other countries that live and work in the USA. Many of our journals that report on global mission employ journalists from other countries. If Mr. Calero can be detained and threatened with deportation, then so can any of our church members from other countries. The Directors of Mission Boards from many national church bodies are watching the case of Mr. Calero very closely.

We expect that you will release Mr. Calero promptly and issue him and his wife an apology. I pray that this does not lead to another lengthy court battle between the Church and the INS as the illegal detention and exclusion of Central American refugees by the INS which took place in the 1980's.

Awaiting your prompt response,


Rev. Daniel Dale