

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 28/99 (AMR 51/37/99, 9 March 1999) - Death Penalty/Legal Concern

USARoy Roberts

Amnesty International very much regrets that Roy Michael Roberts, convicted of killing a prison guard in 1983, was executed as scheduled on 10 March 1999 by lethal injection at the state penitentiary in Potosi, Missouri. His last words were, "You're killing an innocent man."

Governor Mel Carnahan turned down a last minute appeal for clemency, rejecting pleas from His Holiness Pope John Paul II, *Dead Man Walking* author Sister Helen Prejean and the Rev. Jesse Jackson, among others, to halt the execution. In a letter to Carnahan on Saturday 6 March, Jesse Jackson wrote that, without clemency, Missouri faces 'the troubling prospect of taking the life of a man for a crime he may not have committed.'

This brings the total number of executions in the USA this year to 25. Since the resumption of executions in 1977 a total of 525 people have been executed, 35 of them in Missouri.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. Letters expressing regret at the execution may be sent to the authorities indicated in the original UA.