

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AMR 51/03/93

Distr: UA/SC

Further information on EXTRA 104/92 (AMR 51/128/92, 8 December 1992) Death
Penalty 6 January 1993

USA: (State of Washington) Westley Allan Dodd

Westley Allan Dodd was executed as scheduled, by hanging, on 5 January 1992 in the state of Washington, USA. The execution followed the dismissal of a legal challenge filed in Washington state Supreme Court that hanging is a cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore unconstitutional.

This is the first execution in the state since 1963, and the first execution to be carried out in the USA this year.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Governor Gardner will be leaving office on 10 January 1993, and will be replaced by Governor-elect, Mike Lowry. Please continue action to both as recommended below:

To Governor Gardner, (to arrive by 10 January 1993):

- expressing regret at the execution of Westley Dodd, and at the resumption of executions in Washington state after nearly 30 years without any.

To Governor-elect Mike Lowry, (Governor Mike Lowry as of 10 January 1993):

- congratulating him on his appointment as Governor of Washington state;
- expressing regret at the execution of Westley Dodd, and at the resumption of executions in Washington state after nearly 30 years without any;
- urging him to grant clemency by commuting all death sentences which may come before him in the future;
- acknowledging the very serious nature of the crimes for which people are sentenced to death and expressing concern for the victims of violent crime;
- expressing Amnesty International's view that it opposes the death penalty unconditionally in all cases, believing it to be an extreme form of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, and a violation of the right to life, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments;
- stating that international treaties and standards encourage governments to restrict the use of the death penalty, with a view to its ultimate abolition, and that worldwide, over 40 percent of all countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice;
- stating Amnesty International's additional concerns about the application of capital punishment in practice which include the following:
 - the death penalty is irrevocable, and even when the most stringent safeguards are applied, can be inflicted on the innocent;

- it is brutalising to all who are involved in the process;
- it is an act of violence, and violence tends to provoke violence;
- it is often imposed disproportionately against the poor and disadvantaged;
- referring to detailed research in the USA and other countries on the use of the death penalty which has provided no evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments; state the fact that no decline in homicides has been identifiable in those US states which now execute prisoners on a regular basis; referring to the annual national crime report, released in August 1992 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) which reported that violent crime in Texas, which has

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carried out more executions than any other US state, had increased during 1991 over the previous year by almost three times as much as that of the nation as a whole during the same period.

APPEALS ARRIVING BY 10 January 1993:

1) The Honorable Booth Gardner
Governor of Washington
Legislative Bldg
Olympia, WA 98504
USA

Telephone: +1 206 753 6780
Faxes: +1 206 753 4110
Telexes: 0236 751924

Salutation: Dear Governor

2) Governor-elect Mike Lowry
Washington State Transition Government
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USA

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Faxes: +1 206 586 0903

Salutation: Dear Governor-elect Lowry/

APPEALS ARRIVING AFTER 10 January 1993:

Governor Lowry
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Salutation: Dear Governor

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and to diplomatic representatives of the USA in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.