

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 51/136/95

30 October 1995

Further information on EXTRA 104/95 (AMR 51/121/95, 12 September 1995) and follow-up (AMR 51/129/95, 29 September) - Death Penalty

USA (Illinois)George DELVECCHIO

George DelVecchio, white, is scheduled to be executed in Illinois on 22 November 1995. He was sentenced to death for murder in November 1979.

Attorneys representing DelVecchio had previously appealed his death sentence on the grounds that his trial judge, Judge Garippo, may have been biased against him. Judge Garippo was part of the prosecution team in DelVecchio's 1965 conviction for murder. The judge had claimed that he only took part in two decisions during the trial process. However, the appeal currently filed by DelVecchio's lawyers claims that Judge Garippo was more comprehensively involved in the case.

During the sentencing phase of the trial, the prosecutor argued that a death sentence was necessary to prevent DelVecchio ever being eligible for parole. This agreement ignored the fact that DelVecchio had elected to be sentenced under a scheme introduced the previous year which abolished the availability of parole.

In Illinois the governor has sole authority to grant clemency, commutations or reprieves. The State Prison Review Board makes recommendations to the Governor who decides whether or not to follow its recommendation.

As of 31 August 1995 there were 161 prisoners under sentence of death in Illinois. The most recent prisoner to be executed in Illinois was Charles Albanese, on 20 September 1995. The method of execution is lethal injection.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English if possible, or make telephone calls:

To the Illinois Prison Review Board:

- urging the State Prison Review Board to recommend to Governor Edgar that he grant clemency to George DelVecchio by commuting his sentence of death;

To Governor Edgar:

- expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crime and their relatives;
- urging him to commute the death sentence of George DelVecchio;
- expressing opposition to the death penalty in all cases.

APPEALS TO:

James K Williams, Chairman
State Prison Review Board
319 E Madison, Suite A
Springfield, IL 62701
USA

Telephone: + 1 217 782 7273

Faxes: + 1 217 524 0012

Salutation: Dear Mr Williams

The Honorable Jim Edgar

Governor of Illinois

207 State House

Springfield, IL 62706

USA

Telephone: + 1 217 782 6830

Faxes: + 1 217 782 3560

E-mail: governor@accessil.com

Salutation: Dear Governor

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The Letters Editor

Chicago Tribune

435 N. Michigan

Chicago, Il 60611

USA

and to diplomatic representatives of the USA accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.