

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**EXTRA 78/92**

**Death Penalty**

**11 September 1992**

**USA (Texas):**

**Eight executions scheduled in 7 day period**

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Eight executions are scheduled in Texas, USA, within a seven day period in September. Amnesty International is deeply concerned at the escalating rate at which death warrants are being issued and carried out in the state. This is the largest number of execution dates set by a single state within a 7 day period since the death penalty was re-introduced by US states in the mid-1970s.

Earlier this year, 7 executions were scheduled in a 15 day period in Texas (see EXTRA 41/92, AMR 51/47/92, 7 April 1992 and most recent follow up, AMR 51/61/92 of 30 April 1992).

DAVID LONG and IRINEO MONTOYA, are both due to be executed on 17 September.

David Long is white. Irineo Montoya is Mexican, and was sentenced to death on 18 June 1986 for the murder of a white female.

CORNELIUS GOSS and KARL HAMMOND, are both scheduled for execution on 18 September. Cornelius Goss is black. Karl Hammond, black, was sentenced to death for the murder of a female.

WARREN BRIDGE is scheduled to be executed on 21 September. He is white and was sentenced to death in September 1980 for the murder of a white male.

JAMES DEMOUCHETTE is scheduled to be executed on 22 September. Demouchette, black, was sentenced to death in April 1983 for the murders of three white male victims.

ANDRE LEWIS, who is black, is scheduled to be executed on 22 September.

RICARDO ALDAPE GUERRA, Mexican, is scheduled to be executed on 24 September.

(For further information on this case, see EXTRA 48/92, AMR 51/63/92, 7 May 1992; and follow-ups AMR 51/67/92, 12 May 1992, and AMR 51/101/92, 3 September 1992).

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Texas continues to lead the nation in death sentencing and executions. As of April 1992, there were 349 prisoners under sentence of death; nine prisoners have been executed in the state so far this year, the most recent being Curtis Johnson on 11 August 1992. The method of execution is lethal injection.

Research conducted in different countries has failed to reveal convincing evidence that the death penalty deters serious crime more effectively than other punishments. No decline in homicides has been identifiable in those US states which now execute prisoners on a regular basis. Crime statistics issued in Texas in April 1992 revealed that 1991 was the most violent in Texas history, with a record number of homicides (11 percent more than in 1990) and

a 12.7 percent increase in violent crime. Five prisoners were executed by the state in 1991.

Clemency has not been granted to any prisoner under sentence of death in Texas since the death penalty was reintroduced there in the mid 1970s. Under Texas' clemency rules, the governor may commute a death sentence only if she receives a favourable recommendation from a majority of the 18-member Board of Pardons and Paroles. The Board has convened only rarely to consider petitions for clemency (to Amnesty International's knowledge, the Board met once in 1987, and once in 1992). Their reluctance to hold full

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clemency hearings is a matter of great concern to Amnesty International.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes in English if possible:**

- urging the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to convene clemency hearings to consider the cases of David Long, Irineo Montoya, Cornelius Goss, Karl Hammond, Warren Bridge, James Demouchette, Andre Lewis and Ricardo Aldape Guerra;
- asking the Board to recommend that Governor Richards grant clemency to each of these prisoners by commuting their death sentences;
- expressing deep concern at the increasing numbers of executions being scheduled in Texas, and at the state's high rate of executions;
- stressing that the death penalty has not been shown to deter violent crime more effectively than other punishments, and referring to the alarming increase in violent crime in Texas in 1991 despite its regular use of the death penalty;
- urging the state to consider alternative punishments that would be more in keeping with the principles and values of a civilized society.

**APPEALS TO**

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles  
8610 Shoal Creek Boulevard, PO Box 13401  
Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711-3401  
USA

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TX 78711, USA**

**Faxes: + 1 512 406 5231**

**Telephone: + 1 512 406 5852**

**Salutation: Dear Board Members**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

The Honorable Ann Richards  
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USA

**Faxes: + 1 512 463 1849**

**Salutation: Dear Governor Richards**

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

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY, TO ARRIVE IN TEXAS BY 17 SEPTEMBER 1992.** Please check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 September 1992.