

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AMR 51/19/97

10 April 1997

Further information (4) on EXTRA 16/95 (AMR 51/26/95, 16 February 1995) and follow-up (AMR 51/40/95, AMR 51/65/95, AMR 51/60/95) - Death Penalty

USA (TEXAS) Clarence LACKEY

Clarence Lackey is scheduled to be executed in Texas on 20 May 1997. He was sentenced to death for the 1977 murder of Toni Diane Kumpf.

Clarence Lackey is currently one of the longest serving death row prisoners in the USA. In 1995 he appealed his death sentence on the grounds that his prolonged captivity while under a sentence of death constituted cruel and unusual punishment and was therefore in violation of the United States Constitution. The appeal was denied.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International is deeply concerned at the number of executions being carried out in the USA in general, and in Texas in particular. Of the 370 executions carried out in the USA since the death penalty was resumed in the mid 1970s, 110 have been carried out in Texas. The method of execution is lethal injection.

In Texas the governor may commute a sentence of death only if he receives a favourable recommendation from the Board of Pardons and Paroles. The Board consistently refuses to hold full clemency hearings in death penalty cases, and apart from a number of commutations granted in the 1980s as the result of two key court rulings, the Board has never recommended clemency in any death penalty case in recent years.

There are currently over 400 prisoners under sentence of death in Texas. The most recent person to be executed in Texas was David Spence on 3 April 1997.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please telephone or send telegrams, faxes in English if possible:

- expressing deep concern that Clarence Lackey is scheduled to be executed on 20 May 1997 and at the high number of executions currently taking place in Texas;
- urging the Board to recommend that Governor Bush grant clemency to Clarence Lackey;
- expressing concern and sympathy for the families and friends of the victims of violent crime;
- expressing opposition to the death penalty in all cases.

APPEALS TO:

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles
Executive Clemency Unit
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Pardons and Paroles Division
PO Box 13401
Austin, TX 78711, USA

Faxes: + 1 512 467 0945

Telephone: +1 512 406 5852

Telegrams: Pardons and Paroles Board, Austin, Texas

Salutation: Dear Board Members

COPIES TO:

The Honourable George W. Bush
Governor of Texas
Office of the Governor
PO Box 12428, Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711, USA

Faxes: +1 512 463 1849

Salutation: Dear Governor

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 May 1997.