

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 51/076/2003

28 May 2003

Further information on EXTRA 24/03 (AMR 51/064/2003, 01 May 2003) – Death penalty

USA (Oklahoma)

Robert Wesley Knighton (m), white, aged 62

Robert Knighton was executed in Oklahoma on 27 May. He was sentenced to death in December 1990 for the murders of Virginia Denney and her husband Richard Denney, who were shot dead in their home on 8 January 1990.

The Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board unanimously rejected clemency on 20 May. Among those appealing to the Board for clemency was Sue Norton. Richard Denney was her adoptive father and Virginia Denney was her stepmother. Sue Norton said that she wanted “no part in his [Robert Knighton's] murder”.

Of 855 executions carried out in the USA between January 1977 and 28 May 2003, Oklahoma now accounts for 63. Among the US states with the death penalty, it is ranked third in the number of executions it has carried out. Eight of the 35 executions in the USA this year have been carried out in Oklahoma. For further information on Oklahoma's death penalty see AI report, *Old habits die hard: The death penalty in Oklahoma* (AMR 51/055/2001, April 2001).

No further action by the UA Network is requested. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.