

Thursday 7 June, 2007

Mr. Milton E. Nix, Jr.
Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles
42 Martin Luther King, Jr Drive, S.E.
Suite 458, Balcony Level, East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334-4909

Dear Mr. Nix:

I am writing to urge you to grant clemency to Mr. Troy Davis, whose case may appear before the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles in the near future. There are several issues involved in this tragic situation that I bring to you for consideration.

First, I want to express my profound sympathy to the family and friends of Officer McPhail whose life was taken in a criminal act. I believe that the State of Georgia has the right to punish the person who is responsible for this crime. I also believe that punishment and compensation can be achieved by incarceration with strict laws concerning parole.

Secondly, the death penalty can be irreversibly wrong when there is an execution of a person who may possibly be innocent. The conviction and death sentence of Mr. Davis was based on testimony of key witnesses and did not result from physical evidence. It is my understanding that almost all of the witnesses have since recanted or contradicted their trial testimony. Many of the witnesses have come forward stating that they signed statements under conditions of intense pressure and fear. This presents a serious question of the validity of the conviction and increases the possibility that the State of Georgia could execute an innocent citizen.

The gospel that Christians proclaim is a gospel of mercy, love and forgiveness. I believe that the death penalty is not compatible with the gospel. The common good and public security can be achieved in other ways. The gospel calls us to proclaim the sacredness of human life under all circumstances.

Thank you for your consideration of the 120 people who have been wrongly convicted in capital cases since 1976, six of whom were from Georgia. It is urgent that you review the information in this case so that our state does not make an irreversible decision to take the life of Mr. Davis.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

□ Wilton D. Gregory
Archbishop of Atlanta

WDG/pmc

