

Execution elicits opposing vigils

WALLA WALLA, Wash. (AP) — While death penalty opponents prayed silently by candlelight outside the state penitentiary, those who wanted Westley Allan Dodd to hang set off firecrackers and waved sparklers.

After his midnight execution, about 150 people cheered Dodd's death like boosters at a pep rally. One woman tugged at a noose she had slipped around her neck.

"I'm feeling real good about this. Justice has been served," another woman, Dena Brown of Walla Walla, said.

On the prison grounds, opponents and proponents of the death penalty were separated into adjacent fenced lots. Prison officials arrested five death penalty opponents after they climbed a snowy embankment near a guard tower. They were in jail early Tuesday, Walla Walla County sheriff's officials said.

The 50 capital punishment opponents were as somber as the proponents were jubilant.

"At five after 12, I looked up at the prison and just had a feeling of sorrow and pain," said the Rev. Jeff Spencer of Richland, struggling with the emotion in his voice. "I thought about the victims' families. I thought about Wes' family. I thought about Wes himself."

"It's a very brutal thing our state has done."

Dodd, 31, was pronounced dead at 12:09 a.m. He was put to death for molesting and murdering three young boys in 1989.

Dodd rejected all appeals on his behalf. He selected hanging over lethal injection because he strangled one of his victims.

Debbie Miller of Walla Walla said she braved the near-zero wind chill and three inches of snow to stand outside the prison because of Dodd's victims.

"I'm here for the kids that were killed. I have a 4-year-old boy at home," she said. "I'm here for the families."

While proponents held up signs that said "Dodd should dangle" and sang rock songs with good-bye themes, the opponents kept a silent vigil with lighted candles.

Tears rolled down several faces and voices were scratchy with feeling when word of Dodd's death was received.

"You were on the right side of history. You were on the right side of the moral issue, and we will prevail," Magdaleno "Len" Rose-Avila, a regional official for Amnesty International, told the group.

On the state Capitol steps in Olympia, about 40 opponents of the death penalty held a candlelight vigil throughout the evening. There were no chants or songs, just quiet conversation in the light rain.

"The execution unleashes something ugly in society," said Glen Anderson, an organizer of Olympians Against the Death Penalty. "It gives the state's blessings on the use of violence to solve our problems. It perpetuates the cycle of violence when the government sees killing as appropriate."

Autopsy may prevent future hangings

OLYMPIA, Wash (AP) — The execution of Westley Allan Dodd might provide evidence that could be used to prevent other inmates from dying on the gallows, an attorney said.

"We couldn't stop this hanging, but maybe we'll be able to stop those in the future," said Timothy Ford, a lawyer who represented 26 state taxpayers in an unsuccessful bid to halt the hanging.

Reporters who witnessed the hanging early Tuesday said Dodd appeared to die instantly and without struggle, but there were some contrary indications, Ford said.

Witness accounts suggested "some movement about 30 or 40 seconds" after Dodd's bound and hooded body plunged through the gallows, "indicating that death was not instantaneous," he said.

Dodd may have suffered during "a period of prolonged con-

sciousness, or some period of consciousness," said Ford, who has handled and worked on appeals in capital punishment cases nationwide.

At least one reporter who witnessed the execution said he thought he saw some slight movement in Dodd's abdomen, but most agreed Dodd was not conscious and that the movement probably was involuntary muscle contractions.

An autopsy being conducted Tuesday in Seattle could show whether Dodd died instantly and without suffering.

"Even if that happened this time, that doesn't mean it will happen the next time," Ford said.

The question is central to claims by death penalty opponents that hanging is cruel and unusual punishment and thus is banned by the Constitution.

was collected by the agency last year.

Child support payments can often mean the difference between a family on welfare and a self-sufficient family, said AFS Administrator Stephen Minnich.

But Jaeger added that finding these parents is important for another reason.

"It's not just about money," she said. "It's also about getting an emotional contact with these children from their parents."

WANTED

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have their own program, Jaeger said, and the idea to begin one here began after the national agency found a delinquent parent in Oregon.

Non-payment of child support is a huge problem, Jaeger said, with half-a-billion dollars in current and back payments due last year in Oregon. Of that figure, only about \$120 million

ET ALS

MEETINGS

Japanese Student Organization will meet today at 4:30 p.m. in EMU Cedar Room E. For more information, call 687-1682.

College Republicans will meet tonight from 7 to 7:30 in the College Republican Office. For more information, call 747-3679.

Students for Choice will meet tonight at 7 in Room 112 Willamette. For more information, call 346-0649.

Students for Choice 20th Anniversary Benefit Committee will meet today at 5 p.m. in EMU Century Room B. For more information, call 346-0649.

Alpha Phi Omega will meet tonight at 6 in EMU Century Room A. For more information, call 687-0579.

Unwanted Sexual Behavior Task Force will meet today from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in EMU Cedar Rooms A and B. For more information, call 346-3210.

Deadline for submitting Et Als to the Emerald front desk, EMU Suite 300, is noon the day before publication. The news editor does not have a time machine. Et Als run the day of the event unless the event takes place before noon.

Notices of events with a donation or admission charge will not be accepted. Campus events and those scheduled nearest the publication date will be given priority. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for grammar and style. Et Als run on a space-available basis.



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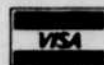


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