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FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE, INC.**
449 Auburn Avenue, N.E. Atlanta, Georgia 30312 (404) 524-1956

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Mr. Wayne Snow, Director
Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles
Floyd Veterans Memorial Bldg.
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S.E.
Atlanta, Ga. 30334

July 8, 1987

Dear Mr. Snow,

I am writing to you with deep concern about the pending execution of Warren McCleskey. I know that the members of the State Board of Pardons and Parole now have the chance to spare Warren McCleskey's life. I appeal to you to accept this opportunity for the sake of justice and humanity.

Despite the McCleskey decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, there is overwhelming evidence that the death penalty discriminates against racial minorities. Major studies of Georgia, Florida and national execution patterns have all reached the same compelling conclusion: That those convicted of killing whites are far more likely to be executed than those convicted of killing blacks.

I am also firmly opposed to the death penalty because it makes irrevocable any possible miscarriage of justice. It has been documented that at least 25 Americans who were later found to be innocent have been executed in this century. On the average, an innocent person has been convicted of murder in the U.S. once every year since 1910.

State-sponsored executions set a dehumanizing example of brutality that only encourages violence. Allowing the state to kill its own citizens diminishes our humanity and sets a

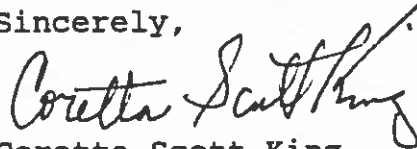
dangerous and sadistic precedent which is unworthy of a civilized society. Of all the industrialized nations, only the U.S. and South Africa subject their people to capital punishment.

Although my husband was assassinated and my mother-in-law was murdered, I refuse to accept the cynical judgement that their killers deserve to be executed. To do so would perpetuate the tragic cycle of violence that feeds on itself. It would be a disservice to all that my husband and his mother lived for and believed.

The death penalty only adds to the suffering of surviving family members and loved ones of the victims and offenders alike. For them, revenge and retribution can never produce genuine healing. It can only deprive them of the opportunity for forgiveness and reconciliation that is needed for the healing process.

For these reasons, I appeal to you in the spirit of brotherhood and human decency to commute the pending execution of Warren McCleskey. Please do what you can to help put an end to the shameful spectacle the government murdering its own people and help us create the kind of society in which we can all take pride.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Coretta Scott King". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Coretta Scott King