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Roderick Keith Johnson Speaks Out About Verdict in Prison Rape Case (10/19/2005)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Johnson Says He Will Continue to ""Fight for Victims of Prison Rape""

WICHITA FALLS, TX -- Roderick Keith Johnson, a gay former prisoner who was repeatedly raped and sold as a sex slave by prison gangs, today expressed disappointment in a jury verdict dismissing his civil lawsuit against the prison officials who ignored his pleas for help.

During the federal trial that began September 19, the jury listened to horrifying testimony from prisoners who had witnessed Johnson being forced into sexual acts, while prison officials ignored his screams for help and looked the other way. The jury returned a 10-2 verdict yesterday refusing to hold those prison officials accountable.

Johnson issued the following statement in response to the decision:

""I am disappointed by the jury's decision yesterday to find in favor of the six officials who failed to protect me from continued sexual abuse while I was confined at the Allred Unit. However, I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to tell the world what happened to me. This case was never about money but about justice. Even though I didn't win my case in court, I know the case has accomplished a great deal. Prison rape is a huge problem. This process has opened some eyes to the violence that takes place everyday, and I hope it will encourage others to get

Prisoners' Rights:
The ACLU's National Prison Project is the only national litigation program on behalf of prisoners. Since 1972, the NPP has represented more than 100,000 men, women and children. The NPP continues to fight unconstitutional conditions and the "lock 'em up" mentality that prevails in the legislatures. Learn more about our project and take action to protect the rights guaranteed to all Americans.

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involved in doing something about it.""

"I would like to thank the American Civil Liberties Union and its National Prison Project for supporting me and for their commitment to helping eliminate rape in prison. I know they will continue to fight to protect others facing similar abuse. I pray that more organizations will join our struggle."

"For me, I will continue to fight for other victims of prison rape, struggle to raise awareness of the problems they confront and find solutions for protecting them. There are many silent victims who have not received the care and attention that they deserve. I will also continue to be involved in advocacy campaigns on behalf of incarcerated people and those leaving prison, and to promote projects that help former prisoners returning to their communities to make the transition."

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