

Public Meeting
National Prison Rape Elimination Commission
at the University of Notre Dame, March 31, 2005

Closing Remarks by Chairman:

We have to, unfortunately, end this dialog. I think it's been a very good ... and it's been informative for me to hear what you all have to say. And I do thank you for your candor. You know this last issue we were talking about-- the racial issue-- is a very sensitive issue for me because I've had discussions with some of my judicial colleagues on this issue, where some of my colleagues, white colleagues, have taken the position that they shouldn't lock up a young white guy, whereas compared they should lock up the young black guy, because the young black guy would somehow be able to endure the circumstances of imprisonment to a greater extent than the young white guy. I have a real problem, as a black man, with accepting that. And I guess that leads me to the conclusion that there is a problem with saying that we should segregate, based upon racial lines, because if there's not that young--and I'm not saying in any way advocating that young, vulnerable white men be subjected to rape-- available, I would suspect that somebody who wants to rape is going to rape somebody else. So, it's going to be that young vulnerable black man.

But that's just my personal take on it. But again, I want to thank all of you for your participation and your candor. I hope we can continue this dialogue with you and with other people who have an interest in this, and I'm confident that if we can have this same type of openness, that, ultimately in the time we've been given to do the work we have to do, we can produce a product that hopefully starts to have an impact, systemically, on this problem. So, thank you.