

STATEMENT OF CHANCE MARTIN

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Mr. Chance, thank you.

CHANCE MARTIN: Thank you. Good morning, and welcome to San Francisco.

My name is Chance Martin, and I was raped in a county jail in 1973 in Indiana when I was still a high school student. I was 18 and attending a party at a Holiday Inn with my girlfriend when I was taken to jail. I didn't even know why we were arrested until later.

I found out later that a guy at the party had dropped a chunk of hash in the lobby in front of a hotel detective, and the police came and took everybody at the party away.

It was very late when I was taken to jail. They put me in a cell, a big cage, really, with about 40 guys stacked in bunk beds. I was scared out of my mind. I was a little guy back then, and I had long hair. I was kind of pretty. I kept thinking that I was going to get to make a phone call and all of this would be over, but that didn't happen.

I was assaulted within 24 hours. I must have looked as scared and dejected as I felt, because this guy came up and sat on the bunk next to me and said, "Let's cheer you up and play some cards."

I couldn't even figure out what they were playing. I thought we were playing poker, but then they said, "Okay. You lost. Pay up." That's when

one of these guys told me they were going to fuck me.

I said, "Oh, no, you're not."

And they said, "You see that other guy over there?"

And this guy's face -- I swear to God, I've never seen anybody's face that badly beaten. He looked like he had gone through the windshield of a car.

They said, "Do you want that to happen to you?" And these guys were trustees.

They started jamming me with a broomstick, and they just kept beating me. They knocked the wind out of me, and I curled up in a ball on the floor. They dragged me to a bunk, and this guy said, "Now you have to give me head."

I didn't know what he meant. I had never heard the term "head" before.

One of them started sodomizing me, and it hurt so bad that later on with two of the other guys I was given a choice, and I chose to go down on them rather than get sodomized because the anal sex hurt so much.

To the best of my recollection, it was six guys, but it could have been more. I don't remember any of their faces.

For the rest of the time I was in that cell, the guy with the beat-up face became my role model. I stayed the hell away from everyone. I was so mad

at myself because I didn't feel like I had put up a good fight. I really wished that they would have beaten me as bad as that other guy.

But the guy I was pissed off at the most was the guy that dropped the hash in the lobby. He was there in the cell with me and never tried to help me.

It was humiliating. I knew a lot about embarrassment, but this was the first time that I was humiliated.

My mother picked me up from jail. And when I told her what happened to me, she said I deserved it. After that I knew I was on my own.

After I was released from jail, I got kicked out of high school because of the arrest. I was told I was facing five years in prison. My father arranged a deal with the justice of the peace to expunge my record if I enlisted in the military. I chose the Air Force even though this was in the middle of the Vietnam War because I was so afraid of what might happen to me in prison.

It would have been so easy to protect vulnerable people in that jail, but they didn't even try. They had guys who were charged with attempted murder and assault with a deadly weapon thrown in with drunk drivers. There was no supervision in that jail. There was no guard who had a line of sight into the cell. The guards' office was pretty far away, and the T.V. was on all the time. This was zero supervision. The only time I saw a guard the

whole time was when they were bringing a prisoner in or taking a prisoner out or when they inspected the cell in the morning to see that the trustees had swept and mopped.

What happened to me in that cell has affected my life in so many ways. I think it permanently damaged my self-confidence. I had a girlfriend when I was arrested, but I've never really been able to have a functional relationship since then.

Because of what happened to me in that cell, I've questioned my sexuality. There was a time between my second and third marriages when I really wanted to be gay because it would resolve so much conflict. I never questioned my sexuality before I went to jail.

I've been diagnosed with mental illness and hospitalized more times than I can count. I've abused drugs and alcohol and tried to kill myself on the installment plan. I couldn't successfully commit suicide; although, I wanted to worse than anything in the world. I was homeless on and off for about six years.

Being raped in that cell and being diagnosed with mental illness were the two pivotal events in my life. I'm overcoming it now, but the rape took 20 years away from my life.

What happened to me was barbaric. Please

work to put safeguards in place so that no one else has to go through what I went through.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WALTON: Thank you very much, Mr. Martin.

There were two things I forgot to do, which I should do now. We will be holding hearings throughout the country focusing on the particular aspect of the problem of prison sexual assault as we go about our fact-finding process.

Today's hearing -- and we do have documents that indicate this -- is focusing on the problem related to vulnerable individuals who find themselves behind prison walls.

And I guess I should indicate that I am a commissioner also. I forgot to indicate that. And I am a United States District Judge in the District of Columbia.

There's just one thing I would like to comment on before we move on, because I think it's important. What Mr. Martin said his mother said to him is all too often what you hear from people in reference to this situation, and that is that it's deserved.

And no one deserves to be treated in this way, regardless of what they have done that results in them being incarcerated.