

"They Don't Care About Us" Music Video / Short Film (Prison Version)

*Date range confirmed in François Allard and Richard Lecocq's "Michael Jackson: All the Songs: The Story Behind Every Track" ("March 1996")*

Spike Lee, director. ["Civil Disobedience"](#). [Dangerous Zone fanzine article](#)

Michael came to my house in Brooklyn, we sat and talked for four hours about the arts, movies we like, musicians – just the stuff we admired... And I mentioned to Michael that, on his History CD, there was a song I would really love to do a music video for, this great ballad Stranger in Moscow. And Michael said, 'You do music videos?' 'Yeah, Michael, I do lots of music videos.' So I gave him the reel with the stuff I'd done, and he said, 'Great!' Then the next time he called me back he said, 'I want you to do Stranger in Moscow, but let's do They Don't Care About Us first.' "The original concept was not meant to be two videos, the prison stuff was going to be combined with the stuff we shot in Brazil. The marching orders Michael gave to me were that he wanted it to be hard-driven, he wanted the spark, an edge to it. He wanted to see a lot of archival footage in it that would chronicle man's inhumanity to his fellow bothers and sisters. And using that as a starting point, we came up with this idea of Michael being one of many convicts in this prison."

"Everything he's involved in, he wants it to be the very best it ever was. That's a great attitude, and it's also a great responsibility. And in everything he does, he told me, 'Spike, I want this to be the best' – he doesn't call it a music video – 'I want this to be the best short film ever!' I said, 'Okay, Mike!'" (laughing)