

Dear Ms. Rivers-Graham:

How does one commence a hunger strike satisfactorily to the administration (AKA "Operations") of this prison?

I was written up on two bogus disciplinary charges the last time I went on hunger strike. I went to the Lieutenant's office for the hunger strike at 9:00 AM on Friday, July 15, 2011. At or shortly after 1:00 PM I was committed to the Special Housing Unit (SHU) for the alleged reason that I had refused to "program" as supposedly educational endeavors are described at this prison. The theory (utterly specious) was that being in "general population" constitutes "programming."

When the formal written accusation (shot) was delivered to me at about 5:00 PM, it included the additional charge of "refusing a direct order" for allegedly refusing a direct order to go back to my housing unit at noon. Predictably, Lisa Jackson, my counselor, and Mr. Ortiz, Marianna-C counselor, found me guilty, although they refused to say which of the charges they deemed credible.

I appealed the sanctions but was told that I waited too long to file with the Warden. I submitted the document through the mail system on 9-15-2011, but it was stamped received by the Warden as of 10-5-2011. My legal material was confiscated during the hunger strike, and I was held incommunicado much of that time. I promptly and diligently attempted informal resolution after the hunger strike was over, and filed my BP9 to the Warden 10 days after receipt of it. Yet I am denied consideration of my appeal, on grounds of alleged delay.

I went to the Lieutenant's office to inquire as to the preferred way that one should commence a hunger strike, and was instructed to ask Lt. Chatters. Ms. Chatters instructed me to ask the Unit Team. Counselor Jackson and Case Manager Morman said I would have to ask the Unit Manager of my unit, Marianna Delta, Ms. Dube-Gilley. Ms. Jackson denied any responsibility for advising me about the correct way to exercise my constitutional rights.

When I reminded Ms. Jackson of her decision on the "shot" described above, she responded that her only responsibility was to sanction me. In other words, she felt no duty to decide whether or not I was guilty. In her mind, accusation is equal to guilt. She correctly perceives the standard operating procedure of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Due process and appeal rights in BOP facilities are a farce, a pretense to deceive the public.

When I asked Ms. Dube-Gilley, on October 6, 2011, she told me that I should inquire of you, in your capacity as Director of Medical.

Ordinarily, the commencement of a hunger strike would be handled by Operations. As you can see, Operations and the Unit Team have elected to hide behind your skirt. Operations is in dire need of adult supervision anyway, and not with respect to hunger strikes only.

Thus the question: How do you suggest that an inmate commence a hunger strike? Without in any way conceding that I did anything wrong last time, I'm offering to accommodate you to the extent reasonably practicable and not inconsistent with my own legitimate interests.

Do you prefer a simple report to sick call, and declaration of hunger strike? You could then place the inmate in a patient room pending further instructions from Operations. If you do not

wish to be accused of willful ignorance or deliberate indifference with respect to inmate health, this seems to be the best choice.

Do you prefer that the inmate simply cease eating? Other inmates will usually notice. Such a policy invites public criticism and litigation in the event of a bad outcome. This also raises another question. Would you wish the inmate to report to sick call when the lack of food results in a drop of blood sugar below 50? In such event, BOP policies clearly require that the inmate be isolated and managed pursuant to the applicable BOP Program Statements (PS). See PS 549.60-549.66.

If inmates are to be written a "shot" each time they hunger strike, just say so and I'll govern my actions accordingly. The papers recently reported about a Saudi Arabian woman who challenged her government for treating women as little more than chattel, by prohibiting them from driving automobiles, or going out and about without a male relative. She was sentenced to 10 lashes. She doubtless knew the potential punishment and decided to stand up for her basic human rights nevertheless.

Freedom is not free. Liberty is not cheap. Principle is often the dearest thing that one can buy. I'll take my fair share and pay retail. Whatever punishment or abuse might be heaped upon me for protesting the lawless corruption at this institution, it isn't likely to include 10 lashes.

Express or implied threats to punish me for exercising a constitutional right increase rather than decrease the likelihood that said constitutional right will be exercised. Any threat to write a "shot" for a peaceful protest is in essence an insult, a suggestion that the affected inmate is far more easily dissuaded than the Saudi woman who peacefully protested despite the threat (now realized) of lashes.

Please don't assume by this question that another hunger strike is a foregone conclusion. I just finished a Release Preparation Program (RPP) class presented by Associate Warden Ms. Heuett, along with Ms. Issom. She showed a video in which Chuck Colson explained how he had reduced recidivism from 50% or more, down to 8%. Mostly, his plan seemed to be the humane treatment of prisoners, encouragement of the inmates' own efforts at self control and self discipline, and non-interference with reasonable opportunities for education and economic advancement.

Ms. Issom said she would be happy to do "anything" to help us. It turns out that "anything" actually means only those things that won't challenge the abysmal educational, recidivism, or health outcomes produced by the incompetent administration of this prison. Even the most basic requests, such as the one for mini-libraries in the housing units, are met with hostility and phony excuses. It's cruel to tantalize prison inmates with success stories about rehabilitation and productive lives, and then to tell them, de facto, that they will be denied access to such opportunities.

If Operations is content to get out of the way, and let the industrious and foresighted members of the inmate population re-create the successes demonstrated by Colson and his organization, you won't see Mr. Stillely in your custody as a hunger striker. Conversely, if the corruption, obstinacy, and obstructionism continue, the probability of more peaceful protest & petition is high.

I look forward to your response.

Kindest personal regards,

/s/ Oscar Stilley, 10579-062

os-10/28/11

FCC Forrest City Low  
PO Box 9000  
Forrest City AR 72336