

# Solitary Watch

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2011/10/14/voices-from-solitary-we-will-not-stop-until-we-are-heard/>

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by [Sal Rodriguez](#) | October 14, 2011

Yesterday, mediators who met with representatives of hunger striking prisoners in the Security Housing Unit at Pelican Bay State Prison confirmed that the prisoners in the unit have decided to end their three-week-old strike. According to the [Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity](#) coalition, The prisoners have cited a memo from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) detailing a comprehensive review of every Security Housing Unit (SHU) prisoner in California whose SHU sentence is related to gang validation. The review will evaluate the prisoners gang validation under new criteria and could start as early as the beginning of next year. Carol Strickman, a lawyer with Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, said, This is something the prisoners have been asking for and it is the first significant step we've seen from the CDCR to address the hunger strikers demands. But as you know, the proof is in the pudding. We'll see if the CDCR keeps its word regarding this new process.

The Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity coalition also reports: The mediation team stated that while the memo indicates statewide changes in the gang validation process for SHU prisoners, the CDCR did not address the status of hunger strikers at Calipatria or Salinas Valley prisons, who are not SHU prisoners. All sources say that at this point, these prisoners will continue to refuse food and stand behind the 5 core demands for all prisoners in California.

Written on the 11th day of the hunger strike, October 6th, the following letter is from a Calipatria State Prison hunger striker. [Hundreds](#) of inmates at Calipatria have taken part in this hunger strike, including a significant number of general population inmates. Many of those in Calipatria's segregation unit are awaiting transfer to Corcoran or Pelican Bay State Prison to serve terms in the Security Housing Units. An Administrative Segregation inmate, the writer reaffirms his commitment to the fulfillment of the hunger strike demands and laments the indifference of the prison staff to the plight of the hunger strikers.

I joined my second hunger strike on September 26th 2011. I am proud to say that today, October 6th 2011 I have successfully completed 11 days without ingesting any food. I have to admit this hunger strike has not been anything nice. 11 days without eating is very difficult but nonetheless it is worth it. To some this is not only a sacrifice but a burden, a nightmare they wish to escape from.

Not ME! Men of respect, men of honor, have committed their lives to the struggle. Literally placed their lives on the line in order to put a stoppage to all these injustices we are subjected to day in and day out. People would rather die than continue living under their current conditions. That why to me, it is a privilege, an honor to be apart of the struggle, to be apart of history for the betterment of not only generic ativan cost me but for all those inside these cement walls I have joined this second hunger strike once again full heartedly with a smile on my face. I will go as far as my body allows me to go.

Very sad to report that prison officials here at Calipatria are not taking this hunger strike very seriously. In fact to them it's a joke. Day 11 and still no word of positive progress and no talk of peaceful negotiations so this mass hunger strike could come to an end. We are left in our cold cells to starve without any care or word from these prison officials. Rumor is we have radios approved and this ASU is in fact designed for T.V. capability. Two (2) engineers made it clear that all these chases in this ASU are equipped with Coaxial antennas for TVs already. They even called [an] ASU Sgt. to show him so that they (Calipatria Prison) won't be able to LIE. Radios that are supposedly approved is a fat lie because there is nothing (memorandum) on paper stating this is true.

Many people have gone Man Down and the way C/Os and medical staff respond to these man downs are very sad to see.

99% of the time it takes prison c/os and medical staff a very long time to respond to the man downs. Ignoring all the cry for help. Trust me, the inmates can get pretty loud when some one goes man down. There is no excuse for C/Os and medical staff to respond to man downs very poorly. People could get seriously hurt that way. Then often they close all the doors from the pods (sections) which makes it difficult for them to hear when one is screaming for help but the tower officer could hear everything. They just ignore the man downs and takes awhile to report it.

Horrible job and treatment we are receiving during the hunger strike. We are told by medical staff that we must lose 5 % of our body weight/become malnourished, fall-out or sick before they can/will provide us with any treatment. CDCR policy states otherwise! Medical physicians take an oath to prevent illness and to protect life, yet everyday my body is deteriorating and the only treatment i am offered is advice to eat something in other words i am being told to give up my First Amendment Right to peacefully protest doesn't deny me

my Eighth Amendment to adequate medical care.

I have to say by the looks of things, this is going to be a long ride. Nonetheless, i am ready and all i have to say about this poor treatment and all the silence from the prison officials is BRING IT!!!

WE WILL NOT STOP UNTIL WE ARE HEARD!

Sal Rodriguez was Solitary Watch's first and most prolific intern. Based in Los Angeles, he served as an editorial writer and columnist for the Orange County Register and the Press-Enterprise, and is now the opinion editor for the Southern California News Group.

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 19, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 6, 2022

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THANK GOD these people still have a voice and a mind and a desire to fight for their rights. But what of those who are mentally ill and in solitary? who speaks for them? My son is one of them, please help. No mentally ill should be in prisons! I am solid with all of you; no matter your crime, solitary is inhumane and is torture and should not be used. God be with you all.

I hope & I pray that the complaints of the conditions @ the prison where the inmates were striking are finally heard. Prison is no country club as so many out here in the free world like to say; it's a wretched existence. However, that said, it's where society puts those who are dangerous, violent, & will not conform to the standards & mores that have been set. People in prison are being punished. To my way of thinking, no 1 has checked his/her humanity @ the door, upon arrival. Prison life should be humane, but I don't advocate a lot of privileges. Prison is to be punishment, not just a break from society.

in other words pelcan bay state prison get back on board the fight those you in the shu should see this fight is not over your war is not over you still have to see your other men to the end they came to your aid and to the aid of inmates to be and are that they do not even know but you called for their helping hand in this war they heard you and came to help you now it is only right that you come to their aid and stand with them in their fight as well it is the right thing to do may there be light in the darkness of justice

so you won half the war well done but there still more to be done how do you know if the cdc means what they say they failed you so many times still yet how are you not sure there not just studying this strike to be reading for the next one you may be falling on your swords and what about the other inmate and their rights still those that still fight i salute you who are willing to die to bring light to the darkness of justice for it is you who hold the true spartan hearts each spartan new the man to his left and right had his back till the end they did not go half way they were all in till the end so many of you dropping out at the small bit of gain is going to hurt the other inmates fighting still for their other rights you did well and i am glad to see some things but still this war is not over sure the shu inmate have a small somewhat of a win but the others still have not won you can not give up on them they are true spartans even more so why you may wonder they willing to stand like the 300 till the end even with lower numbers to me that is spartan strong that is what it takes in the long run i glad to see those in the shu may have a win but we still are not done fighting this war standing spartan strong is not just standing strong but standing strong as one fighting force till the end no matter what it takes do not let the so called promises of cdc to change in a year be your downfall like the spartans who stood as one till one told them the weak spot and then fell those who have seen the movie of 300 know what i speak of one wrong move can be your undoing and even if you raise a nuther bigger strike next time if they do not keep their word will they have already learned a lesson to break your lines it is not the number that will mean your win but the bond of will knowing no matter what the man who stand next to you in this same fight will have your back will not give up and that is spartan strong that's what it takes to win this war may there be light in the darkness of justice

Moved. Until everyone is free.

My heart is with all hunger strikers! I am writing the ones at the Bay and want more of their addresses!  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0056C0LW4>

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