

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2011/09/03/pelican-bay-prisoners-plan-to-resume-hunger-strike/>

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by [Jean Casella and James Ridgeway](#) | September 3, 2011

This summer's prison hunger strike, which eventually spread to some 6,600 inmates in dozens of California facilities, was organized and launched in the short corridor of Pelican Bay State Prisons Security Housing Unit (SHU). The strike ended three weeks after it began, with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation making a few small concessions to the prisoners' demands, and promising to undertake a review of the policies under which inmates are placed and held in the state's SHUs.

Now, sources confirm that the organizers plan to resume their hunger strike to further push for reforms. In a [letter published in the San Francisco Bay Guardian](#), Pelican Bay SHU inmate James Crawford, who goes by the name Mutope Duguma, reported that negotiations with the CDCR had left them disappointed, and we are going forward with our indefinite hunger strike, which will start on Sept. 26, 2011. Duguma continues: We know they probably have manipulated some new attempt to deal with us, but what they fail to realize is that we were never playing. If these people think we are going to remain under this tortuous treatment, then they will get the body count that they seek or a bunch of hospitals filled up throughout the state.

Solitary Watch will provide more details on the resumption of the hunger strike as they become available.

James Ridgeway (1936-2021) was the founder and co-director of Solitary Watch. An investigative journalist for over 60 years, he served as Washington Correspondent for the Village Voice and Mother Jones, reporting domestically on subjects ranging from electoral politics to corporate malfeasance to the rise of the racist far-right, and abroad from Central America, Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia. Earlier, he wrote for The New Republic and Ramparts, and his work appeared in dozens of other publications. He was the co-director of two films and author of 20 books, including a forthcoming posthumous edition of his groundbreaking 1991 work on the far right, *Blood in the Face*. Jean Casella is the director of Solitary Watch. She has also published work in The Guardian, The Nation, and Mother Jones, and is co-editor of the book *Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*. She has received a Soros Justice Media Fellowship and an Alicia Patterson Fellowship. She tweets @solitarywatch.

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 [Juan Moreno Haines](#)

October 25, 2022

by [Solitary Watch Guest Author](#)

October 13, 2022

by [Vaidya Gullapalli](#)

September 29, 2022

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and the blood will be on thare hands god ade tose in the shu to stand strong in the face of the cdc and thare rain of injustice i stand by the inmates on this one solitary has gone to fare not only from what it was ment to do but from proper use as well may thare be light in the darknes of justice

Pelican Bay inmate says We know they probably have manipulated some new attempt to deal with us, but what they fail to realize is that we were never playing. If these people think we are going to remain under this tortuous treatment, then they will get the body count that they seek or a bunch of hospitals filled up throughout the state. Seriously, I dont see this as a bluff they have nothing to lose to get it back up and everything to gain by getting it back on track The world [regardless of how you feel personally] out there has shown enormous support and the agency is at a point of no return in their reform efforts. Credibility is an important tool in these matters.

Although this may sound unreasonable, the rule is when someone is acting or talking like he is insane you gotta find the right wave length to communicate with him Otherwise the only option left is to match their strength with the right attitude to create a win situation. Obviously that would be political suicide and really messy. Reforms can be made with no compromise to securing a safe and orderly prison environment but first, you gotta think about this. Arrangements have been made, and once the dominoes begin to fall, they must continue to fall as arrangements have been made to force the agency to clean up their act in the SHU mission creep. Now is the time to grasp the opportunity to change solitary confinement rules of engagement and resolve outstanding issues already on the table and likely to get more litigation as time goes by. One could make many issues a moot agenda if the SHU policies, procedures and housing assignment criteria / gang validation process are cleaned up before lawsuits pay out millions of dollars guaranteed to be in the bank the way the Supreme Court is ruling these days

Creating fear is a gamble. What is harder is to counter this claim of fear and make it into something they even fear moresince they have already outlined a body count.

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