

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

BILLY RAY DAVIS,

Petitioner,

v.

Civil Action No. 5:08CV4
(STAMP)

WAYNE PHILLIPS,

Respondent.

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER
AFFIRMING AND ADOPTING REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATION OF MAGISTRATE JUDGE

I. Procedural History

According to his petition, pro se petitioner, Billy Ray Davis, pled guilty in the United States District Court, District of South Carolina to violating 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and 846 and was sentenced to 188 months imprisonment. His conviction and sentence were affirmed by the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Thereafter, the petitioner filed an application for a writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2255. The district court denied his application. Subsequently, the petitioner filed an application in this Court for a writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241. In the petition, the petitioner challenges his sentence pursuant to Apprendi v. New Jersey, 530 U.S. 466 (2000).

The matter was referred to United States Magistrate Judge John S. Kaull for initial review and report and recommendation pursuant to Local Rule of Prisoner Litigation Procedure 83.09. Magistrate

Judge Kaull issued a report and recommendation recommending that the petitioner's § 2241 application be denied and dismissed with prejudice. The petitioner did not file objections.

II. Standard of Review

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C), this Court must conduct a de novo review of any portion of the magistrate judge's recommendation to which objection is timely made. As to those portions of a recommendation to which no objection is made, a magistrate judge's findings and recommendation will be upheld unless they are "clearly erroneous." See Webb v. Califano, 468 F. Supp. 825 (E.D. Cal. 1979). Because no objections have been filed, this Court will review the report and recommendation of the magistrate judge for clear error.

III. Discussion

A federal prisoner may seek relief pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241 when a petition pursuant to § 2255 is "inadequate or ineffective to test the legality of his detention." 28 U.S.C. § 2255; In re Vial, 115 F.3d 1192, 1194 (4th Cir. 1997). However, the remedy afforded by § 2255 is not rendered inadequate or ineffective merely because an individual has been unable to obtain relief under that provision. In re Vial, 115 F.3d at 1194 n.5 (citing Tripati v. Henman, 843 F.2d 1160, 1162 (9th Cir. 1988)). Rather, § 2255 is inadequate and ineffective to test the legality of a conviction when:

(1) at the time of the conviction, settled law of this circuit or the Supreme Court established the legality of the conviction; (2) subsequent to the prisoner's direct appeal and first § 2255 motion, the substantive law changed such that the conduct of which the prisoner was convicted is deemed not to be criminal; and (3) the prisoner cannot satisfy the gate-keeping provisions of § 2255 because the new rule is not one of constitutional law.

In re Jones, 226 F.3d 328 (4th Cir. 2000).

In this case, the petitioner has failed to establish the elements required by Jones. Specifically, 21 U.S.C. §§ 841 and 846, the substantive laws under which the petitioner was convicted, have not changed since the date of the petitioner's conviction such that the petitioner's conduct would no longer be deemed criminal. Additionally, the petitioner's reliance on Apprendi is unavailing because, as noted by the magistrate judge, such an argument is expressly foreclosed by the Fourth Circuit's decision in United States v. Sanders, 247 F.3d 139, 146 (4th Cir. 2001).

III. Conclusion

Because, after a review for clear error, this Court concludes that the magistrate judge's recommendation is proper, this Court hereby AFFIRMS and ADOPTS the magistrate judge's report and recommendation. Accordingly, it is ORDERED the petitioner's § 2241 petition be DENIED and DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE. It is further ORDERED that this case be DISMISSED with prejudice and STRICKEN from the active docket of this Court.

Should the plaintiff choose to appeal the judgment of this Court to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit on the issues to which objection was made, he is ADVISED that he must file a notice of appeal with the Clerk of this Court within 30 days after the date that the judgment order in this case is entered. See Fed. R. App. P. 4(a)(1). He is further advised that a certificate of appealability is not required for a federal prisoner proceeding under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. See 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(certificate of appealability is required in a § 2255 proceeding or in a habeas corpus proceeding in which the detention complained of arises from process issued by a State court); see also Fed. R. App. P. 22; Drax v. Reno, 338 F.3d 98, 106 n.12 (2d Cir. 2003).

IT IS SO ORDERED.

The Clerk is DIRECTED to transmit a copy of this memorandum opinion and order to the petitioner. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 58, the Clerk is DIRECTED to enter judgment on this matter.

DATED: March 31, 2008

/s/ Frederick P. Stamp, Jr.
FREDERICK P. STAMP, JR.
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE