

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

ARDITH DOBSON,

Petitioner,

v.

**CIVIL ACTION NO. 5:09cv37
(Judge Stamp)**

KUMA DEBOO, Warden

Respondent.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

I. BACKGROUND

On March 31, 2009, the *pro se* petitioner filed an Application for Habeas Corpus Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §2241. The petitioner is an inmate at FCI Gilmer which is located in Glenville, West Virginia. The petitioner challenges the validity of his conviction. This matter is pending before me for an initial review and Report and Recommendation pursuant to LR PL P 83.09.

II. FACTS

Following a guilty plea, the petitioner was convicted in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky of the manufacture, growth and production of marijuana in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1). On January 24, 2008, the petitioner was sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 33 months, followed by six years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100.00. The petitioner did not file an appeal, nor did he file a motion to vacate his conviction or sentence pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2255. He did, however, mail a letter, dated July 9, 2008, directly to the sentencing judge requesting that his sentence be reduced in light of cooperation he believes he provided in other cases.

Said request was denied by order dated August 28, 2008.¹ The petitioner now attacks the validity of his conviction via this §2241 petition in which he asserts the following grounds for relief: (1) agents of the Drug Enforcement Agency and the officers of the officers of the Kentucky State Police violated his rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and (2) he was denied effective assistance of counsel. As relief, the petitioner seeks to have his conviction overturned and reversed with a finding that “evidence was obtained illegally and that the illegal evidence is suppressed for any further prosecution.” (Doc. 1, p. 7).

III. ANALYSIS

Except as discussed below, a motion filed under §2241 necessarily must pertain to “an applicant’s commitment or detention,” rather than the imposition of a sentence. Compare 28 U.S.C. § 2242 (§2241 application for writ of habeas corpus must allege facts concerning the applicant’s commitment or detention) and 28 U.S.C. §2255 (motions to vacate a sentence brought under §2255 are collateral attacks upon the imposition of a prisoner’s sentence). Because the petitioner herein is seeking to have his conviction vacated, he is seeking §2255 relief not §2241 relief. See In re Jones, 226 F.3d 328 (4th Cir. 2000).

However, despite the fact that a § 2255 petition is the proper vehicle for challenging a conviction or the imposition of a sentence, § 2241 may be used by a federal prisoner to challenge the legality of his conviction or sentence if he can satisfy the mandates of what is known as the Section 2255 “savings clause.” See Reyes-Requena v. United States, 243 F.3d 893, 901 (5th Cir. 2001). The savings clause provides that a prisoner may file a writ of habeas corpus if a remedy through a § 2255 motion is “inadequate or ineffective to test the legality of his detention.” See 28 U.S.C. § 2255. The

¹Information regarding the petitioner’s criminal conviction, subsequent appeal, and collateral attacks are available on PACER by accessing Case Number 7:07-cr-00021-GFVT-1.

petitioner bears the burden of demonstrating that the § 2255 remedy is inadequate or ineffective. See Jeffers v. Chandler, 253 F.3d 827, 830 (5th Cir. 2001); Pack v. Yusuff, 218 F.3d 448, 452 (5th Cir. 2000). It is well established that “in order to establish a remedy is ‘inadequate or ineffective’ under § 2255, there must be more than a procedural barrier to bringing a § 2255 petition.” Hill v. Morrison, 349 F.3d 1089, 1091 (8th Cir. 2001). Furthermore, § 2255 is not inadequate or ineffective merely because the claim was previously raised in a § 2255 motion and denied, or because a remedy under the section is time-barred. United States v. Laurie, 207 F.3d 1075, 1077 (8th Cir. 2000).

The Fourth Circuit has examined the prerequisites for finding that §2255 is an inadequate or ineffective remedy. In the case of In re Jones, 226 F.3d 328 (4th Cir. 2000), the Fourth Circuit concluded that

§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.²

Id. at 333-34.

Although the petitioner has not raised the savings clause, it is clear that he is not entitled to its application. In the instant case, even if the petitioner satisfied the first and the third elements of Jones,

²The “gatekeeping” requirements provide that an individual may only file a second or successive §2255 motion if the claim sought to be raised presents: (1) newly discovered evidence that, if proven and viewed in light of the evidence as a whole, would be sufficient to establish by clear and convincing evidence that no reasonable factfinder would have found the movant guilty of the offense; or (2) a new rule of constitutional law, made retroactive to cases on collateral review by the Supreme Court, that was previously unavailable. 28 U.S.C. § 2255; see Jones, 226 F.3d at 330.

violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) remains a criminal offense, and therefore the petitioner cannot satisfy the second element of Jones. Consequently, the petitioner has not demonstrated that §2255 is an inadequate or ineffective remedy, and he has improperly filed a §2241 petition.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing, the undersigned recommends that the petitioner's §2241 petition be **DENIED and DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE**.

Any party may file, within ten (10) days after being served with a copy of this Recommendation, with the Clerk of the Court, written objections identifying the portions of the Recommendation to which objections are made, and the basis for such objections. A copy of such objections should also be submitted to the Honorable Frederick P. Stamp, Jr., United States District Judge. Failure to timely file objections to the Recommendation set forth above will result in waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of this Court based upon such Recommendation. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1985); Wright v. Collins, 766 F.2d 841 (4th Cir. 1985); United States v. Schronce, 727 F.2d 91 (4th Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 467 U.S. 1208 (1984).

The Clerk of the Court is directed to mail a copy of this Report and Recommendation to the *pro se* petitioner by certified mail, return receipt requested, to his last known address as reflected on the docket sheet.

DATED: May 19, 2009

/s/ James E. Seibert
JAMES E. SEIBERT
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE