

Daniel Gwynn Blog Update

Date: 8/19/12

Subject: Countdown to the Murder of Terrance Williams

It's been a rough week for everyone on the block. Staff are sneaking off to a quiet corner for a quick cry; prisoners masking how much they're truly being affected; but none more so than "Butter," he's been constantly reminded everyday that he is going to be murdered. I can't imagine how he is feeling.

Since his death warrant was signed, the Administration has sent a steady procession of ministers, counselors and other staff members to poke & prod him to see if he's "alright," or to process him for some other thing. I can imagine how annoying all of that is because they did the same thing to me when I was on Phase II. All day, people stopping by to ask stupid questions. They even had the nerve to wake me up out of a sound sleep just to ask, "are you alright?" How annoying!

I was able to see him today, and he's holding on. I told him a funny story that got him laughing pretty good. The best he's had since this nightmare began.

He's petitioned the court for a stay of execution. I believe he'll pursue a challenge of the method of execution, specifically the lethal cocktail being used. It's been reported that three executions were botched due to the combination of ingredients which caused some horrific death scenes. This violates the 8th Amendment to the Constitution against cruel & unusual punishment. Some states has ceased executions until they can find another combination of ingredients, while others have abolished the death penalty altogether.

p.1



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When a State permissibly chooses to impose the death penalty on a properly convicted criminal, the State is in charge of carrying out the sentence, but may not impose "cruel & unusual punishment" in imposing that sentence; this means that the court will not allow a State to use an execution procedure that creates an objectively intolerable risk of harm or a demonstrated risk of severe pain that is substantial when compared to the known and available alternatives. But accidents do happen.

In Sept. 2009, Gov. Ted Strickland postponed the execution of Romell Broom after an attempt to execute him was halted when the execution team was unable to find a vein on Broom's arm after repeated attempts over two hours. They attempted to insert the IV catheter into the crook of his elbow, his wrists, over the knuckle of his first finger, and near his ankles. Twice the team managed to insert a catheter that was not properly secured and caused bleeding. The Governor temporarily stayed other executions, and on Oct. 19th, the district court scheduled a trial on the method-of-execution. The State of Ohio then notified the district court that it was considering an alternative intravenous method-of-execution.

The Eighth Circuit addressed a challenge to Missouri's lethal injection protocol after a series of mistakes in administration of the protocol came to light. The court had found that medical personnel administering the protocol had been incompetent.

When a prisoner's veins prove difficult to locate, a cut-down is implemented. This entails making an incision into an arm or leg to gain IV access.

Tookie Williams & Joseph Clark were victims of botched executions, as well as many more.

p.2

