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TRANSPORTATION OF STATE PRISONERS TO THEIR FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Section 1983 of the Civil Rights Act of 1871 authorizes United States citizens whose constitutional rights have been violated by persons acting under color of state law to bring suit in federal court. State prisoners often bring suits under the Act. Although they do not have a right to be

2. Section 1983 provides:
   Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress.
   Id.

The number of filings has burdened the judicial system. The courts have had difficulty in managing the sheer numbers. See, e.g., Gast v. Daily, 577 F. Supp. 14, 15 (E.D. Wis. 1984); Franklin v. Oregon, 563 F. Supp. 1310, 1316-17 (D. Or. 1983), aff'd in part and rev'd in part sub nom. Franklin v. Murphy, 745 F.2d 1221 (9th Cir. 1984); Green v. Camper, 477 F. Supp. 758, 759-69 (W.D. Mo. 1979). One judge has stated that he has spent as much as 47% of his working time on prisoner cases. See Aldisert Report, supra, at 8 n.14. Another problem is that most of the complaints are filed pro se, id. at 2-3, and are consequently difficult to understand, id. at 11-12. Moreover, pro se pleadings must be given special consideration by the courts. See Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972) (per curiam). The fact that the cases are brought pro se also means that few will be settled, because "meaningful negotiations between prisoners acting pro se and state's attorneys are practically impossible." Turner, supra, at 637; see Aldisert Report, supra, at 13-14 & n.26 (use of counsel would limit frivolous cases). In addition, there is no restraint on unwarranted litigation because the plaintiff, usually proceeding in forma pauperis, is undaunted by the expense of the suit. See Braden v. Estelle, 428 F. Supp. 595, 597-98 (S.D. Tex. 1977) (because of their poverty, prisoners are immune from later tort actions for malicious prosecution) (quoting Jones v. Bales, 58 F.R.D. 453, 463 (N.D. Ga. 1972), aff'd, 480 F.2d 805 (5th Cir. 1973) (per curiam)). Furthermore, preparing for cases provides the plaintiff with "relief from the tedium of prison life." Aldisert Report, supra, at 3 (footnote omitted); see Note, Limitation of State Prisoners' Civil Rights Suits in the Federal Courts, 27 Cath. U.L. Rev. 115, 116 (1977) [hereinafter cited as Civil Rights Suits]. Thus, many cases brought by prisoners under the Civil Rights Act are frivolous.
See Aldisert Report, supra, at 9-10; Federal Judicial Center, Report of the Study Group on the Caseload of the Supreme Court, 57 F.R.D. 573, 586-87 (1972). 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a) (1982) permits any United States court to "authorize the commencement, prosecution or defense of any suit . . . without prepayment of fees and costs or security therefor, by a person who makes affidavit that he is unable to pay such costs or give security therefor." Prisoners have been quick to take advantage of this provision. See, e.g., In re Green, 669 F.2d 779, 781-82 (D.C. Cir. 1981) (prisoner able to file hundreds of complaints in forma pauperis); Boyce v. Alizaduh, 595 F.2d 948, 950 (4th Cir. 1979) (court should permit filing under § 1915(a)), then proceed to next step of determining whether complaint is "frivolous or malicious" within meaning of § 1915(d) which provides that the court may dismiss frivolous in forma pauperis suits; Carter v. Teletron, Inc., 452 F. Supp. 944, 947 (S.D. Tex. 1977) (prisoner able to carry on "lengthy private wars and vendettas . . . at no monetary expense to himself"). But see Braden v. Estelle, 428 F. Supp. 595, 598-601 (S.D. Tex. 1977) (adopting plan whereby prisoner would make a partial payment of fees).


Courts may dismiss frivolous in forma pauperis suits. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (1982). Although Congress has not defined frivolity, courts have held that a complaint is frivolous if it is without arguable merit. See Pace v. Evans, 709 F.2d 1428, 1429 (11th Cir. 1983) (per curiam); see, e.g., McFadden v. Lucas, 713 F.2d 143, 145 (5th Cir.) (forced shaving not violative of civil rights), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 499 (1983); Franklin v. Oregon, 563 F. Supp. 1310, 1325, 1326 (D. Or. 1983) (complaints that prisoner was not awakened from his afternoon nap and that prison guards wore "clapping heels" held to be frivolous), aff'd in part, rev'd in part on other grounds sub nom. Franklin v. Murphy, 745 F.2d 1221 (9th Cir. 1984). Courts have acted to protect themselves from being overwhelmed by the morass of frivolous prisoner suits. See, e.g., In re Green, 669 F.2d 779, 787 (D.C. Cir. 1981) (court threatened to hold petitioner in contempt if he continued to file frivolous complaints); Gast v. Daily, 577 F. Supp. 14, 15 (E.D. Wis. 1984) (court will not allow prisoner to file second in forma pauperis action without court's permission); Franklin v. Oregon, 563 F. Supp. 1310, 1334 (D. Or. 1983) (court will only accept six in forma pauperis suits from same prisoner within each twelve-month period), aff'd in part, rev'd in part on other grounds sub nom. Franklin v. Murphy, 745 F.2d 1221 (9th Cir. 1984); see also Civil Rights Suits, supra, at 122-30 (examining other means of reducing the burden on the courts). Compare Aldisert Report, supra, at 54-58 (recommend ing ways of handling in forma pauperis complaints) with Turner, supra note 3, at 646-47 (arguing against increased requirements for proceeding in forma pauperis). Because so many prisoner actions are frivolous "it is difficult to ensure that the meritorious complaint is found and given careful attention." Aldisert Report, supra, at 11; see Federal Judicial Center, Report of the Study Group on the Caseload of the Supreme Court, 57 F.R.D. 573, 587 (1972).

A significant number of prisoners' civil rights claims are meritorious. See Aldisert Report, supra, at 11; see, e.g., Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 828 (1977) (suit for law library); Bienvenu v. Beauregard Parish Police Jury, 705 F.2d 1457, 1460 (5th Cir. 1983) (allegations of cold, rainy and roach-infested conditions sufficiently stated a cause of action); Madyun v. Thompson, 657 F.2d 868, 873 (7th Cir. 1981) (intentional taking of plaintiff's property constituted a cause of action).

The burden on the courts, however, may be exaggerated for several reasons. Many cases are dismissed quickly, court appearances and trials are rare, and the litigation is not
present at their civil trials, justice may require a prisoner's presence in
complex. See Turner, supra, at 637. But see Aldisert Report, supra, at 3, 11-12 (because the cases are pro se, it is often difficult to understand even the nature of the complaint).

The number of prisoner § 1983 actions has also caused problems for correctional officers who are frequent defendants. See, e.g., MCFadden v. Lucas, 713 F.2d 143, 144 (5th Cir.), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 499 (1983); McGee v. Rankin, 584 F. Supp. 1202, 1203 (W.D. Ark. 1984); Allen v. Coughlin, 527 F. Supp. 1096, 1096 (N.D.N.Y. 1981). In a successful suit, the prisoner may be entitled to a money judgment from his keepers. See Monroe v. Pape, 365 U.S. 167, 174 (1961) (Congress, in enacting the Civil Rights Act, intended to provide a remedy), overruled on other grounds, Monell v. New York City Dept't of Social Servs., 436 U.S. 658 (1978); see also C. Bartollas, Introduction to Corrections 224-25 (1981); V. Fox, Introduction to Corrections 411-14 (2d ed. 1977). In order to protect themselves from liability, many correctional administrators have placed their property in their spouses' names. See V. Fox, supra, at 412-13.

The prisoner cases also impose a burden on the states. The state may have to expend funds to correct what the federal judiciary has found to be unconstitutional prison conditions. See, e.g., Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 828 (1977) (requiring prison authorities to provide inmates with law libraries); Jones v. Diamond, 636 F.2d 1364, 1375-76 (5th Cir.) (en banc) (upholding injunction against overcrowding), cert. dismissed, 453 U.S. 950 (1981); see also Smith v. Sullivan, 611 F.2d 1039, 1044 (5th Cir. 1980) (federal courts have power and duty to intervene to prevent constitutional deprivations). See infra note 51. The state may also suffer monetary losses if it has agreed to indemnify its employees. See C. Bartollas, supra, at 273.

The most pervasive effect on the prison system, however, is not dependent on whether the suit is successful. Although not long ago prisons operated without written rules, "today prison authorities are engulfed in bureaucratic paper. There are regulations, guidelines, policy statements, and general orders; there are forms, files and reports for virtually everything." Turner, supra, at 639. This bureaucratization is the result of a perceived need for accountability to the courts, id., and a real need for protection from prisoner suits, see V. Fox, supra, at 411-15. In addition, litigation is a time consuming process, especially when one warden may be served with several suits. See C. Bartollas, supra, at 273.

5. See Holt v. Pitts, 619 F.2d 558, 560 (6th Cir. 1980); Stone v. Morris, 546 F.2d 730, 735 (7th Cir. 1976); Moeck v. Zajackowski, 541 F.2d 177, 180 (7th Cir. 1976); Clark v. Hendrix, 397 F. Supp. 966, 968-69 (N.D. Ga. 1975). Prisoners do, however, have a right of access to the courts. Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 821 (1977); Andrade v. Hauck, 452 F.2d 1071, 1072 (5th Cir. 1971); see Cruz v. Beto, 405 U.S. 319, 321 (1972); Ex parte Hull, 312 U.S. 546, 549 (1941). Access to the courts must be "adequate, effective, and meaningful." Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 822 (1977); see Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 579-80 (1974) (inmates may assist each other in pursuing civil rights claims); Johnson v. Avery, 393 U.S. 483, 490 (1969) (inmates may assist each other in habeas corpus actions); Spears v. Chandler, 672 F.2d 834, 835 (11th Cir. 1982) (per curiam) (access not adequate when "prisoner's pro se § 1983 action is dismissed for lack of prosecution" when court has refused to order prisoner's presence); Bonner v. City of Pritchard, 661 F.2d 1206, 1212 (11th Cir. 1981) (right of access not limited to preparation and presentation of complaints). Nonetheless, the right of access is not unlimited. See Ross v. Moffitt, 417 U.S. 600, 616 (1974) (state need not provide counsel for indigent in discretionary appeal); Johnson v. Hubbard, 698 F.2d 286, 289 (6th Cir.) (right of access does not require court to pay party's witness fees), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 282 (1983); cf. Price v. Johnston, 334 U.S. 266, 285 (1948) ("[i]lawful incarceration brings about the necessary withdrawal or limitation of many privileges and rights"). Prisoners do not have "an absolute and unrestricted right to file any civil action they might desire. Otherwise, penitentiary wardens and the courts might be swamped with an endless number of unnecessary and even spurious law suits." Tabor v. Hardwick, 224 F.2d 526, 529 (5th Cir. 1955), cert. denied, 350 U.S. 971 (1956). "In cases challenging the validity of confinement in which there are material factual disputes as to events in which the prisoner participated, the Supreme Court has all but mandated the presence of the prisoner." Ball
the courtroom either to act as a witness or to prosecute his claim pro se.7

The writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum is the traditional procedural means of securing a prisoner's presence to testify.8 The writ, by


Prisoners may bring suits other than under the Civil Rights Act, see Corpus v. Estelle, 551 F.2d 68, 70 (5th Cir. 1977) (access to courts includes general civil matters), but because of the nature of confinement, most prisoner actions are brought under § 1983, see Turner, supra note 4, at 610 (“Prison life creates the potential for an enormous number of cases under section 1983.”). This Note, therefore, discusses only prisoner cases brought pursuant to § 1983 of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1982).

6. See, e.g., Ford v. Allen, 728 F.2d 1369, 1370 (11th Cir. 1984) (per curiam); Wiggins v. County of Alameda, 717 F.2d 466, 469 (9th Cir. 1983), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 1425 (1984); Story v. Robinson, 689 F.2d 1176, 1178 (3d Cir. 1982); Spears v. Chandler, 672 F.2d 834, 835 (11th Cir. 1982) (per curiam); ITEL Capital Corp. v. Dennis Mining Supply & Equip., Inc., 651 F.2d 405, 406 (5th Cir. 1981); Ford v. Carballo, 577 F.2d 404, 406 (7th Cir. 1978); Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 480 (5th Cir. 1977); Stone v. Morris, 546 F.2d 730, 737 (7th Cir. 1976).

Courts may also summon prisoners to testify on another's behalf. See, e.g., Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1284 (3d Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985); Jerry v. Francisco, 632 F.2d 252, 255-56 (3d Cir. 1980) (per curiam); Marks v. Calendine, 80 F.R.D. 24, 26 (N.D. W. Va. 1978); cf. United States v. Rigdon, 459 F.2d 379, 380 (6th Cir. 1972) (court has broad discretion to order presence of prisoners as witnesses in criminal cases), cert. denied, 409 U.S. 1116 (1973); United States v. Hathcock, 441 F.2d 197, 200 (5th Cir. 1971) (court should have mandated presence of prisoner, even though defense counsel in criminal case did not state that he would definitely use prisoner as witness).

7. See, e.g., Ford v. Allen, 728 F.2d 1369, 1370 (11th Cir. 1984) (per curiam); Jerry v. Francisco, 632 F.2d 252, 253 (3d Cir. 1980) (per curiam); cf. Price v. Johnston, 334 U.S. 266, 284 (1948) (court may order presence of prisoner to argue his habeas corpus appeal).


The power to issue the writ is explicitly granted to the federal courts by 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c) (1982), which states: “The writ of habeas corpus shall not extend to a prisoner unless . . . . (5) It is necessary to bring him into court to testify or for trial.” Id.

The writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum was one of the early common law writs used “by the courts at Westminster, for removing prisoners from one court into another for the more easy administration of justice.” 3 W. Blackstone, Commentaries *129; see id. at *130. The writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum should be distinguished from “the great and efficacious writ” of habeas corpus ad subciendium, issued to inquire into the legality of the prisoner's confinement. Id. at *131; see Carbo v. United States, 364
statute, must be directed toward the custodian of the detainee.9 The person to whom the writ is directed “shall be required to produce at the hearing the body of the person detained.”10 There is no equivalent statu-


The Judiciary Act of 1789, ch. 20, § 14, 1 Stat. 81, 81-82 (1789) (current version at 28 U.S.C. §§ 1651, 2254 (1982)) authorized federal courts to issue writs of habeas corpus. The Act stated that the writ could be issued to prisoners if it were necessary for them “to be brought into court to testify.” Id.; see Carbo v. United States, 364 U.S. 611, 614 (1961) (quoting Judiciary Act of 1789, ch. 20, § 14, 1 Stat. 81, 81-82 (1789)); Ex parte Bollman, 8 U.S. (4 Cranch) 75, 99 (1807); Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 479-80 (5th Cir. 1977).

Courts have differed as to whether they may issue the writ ad testificandum to require the transportation of prisoners incarcerated outside their territorial jurisdiction. The habeas corpus statute provides that the writ may be granted by courts only “within their respective jurisdictions.” 28 U.S.C. § 2241(a) (1982). The majority view, therefore, had been that courts could not issue such writs extraterritorially. See Edgerly v. Kennelly, 215 F.2d 420, 422-23 (7th Cir. 1954), overruled, Stone v. Morris, 546 F.2d 730, 737 (7th Cir. 1976); Clark v. Hendrix, 397 F. Supp. 966, 974 (N.D. Ga. 1975); Silver v. Dunbar, 264 F. Supp. 177, 179 (S.D. Cal. 1967). The Supreme Court has held, however, that the territorial limitation set out in the statute applies only to the “Great Writ,” see Carbo v. United States, 364 U.S. 611, 619 (1961), and that the writ may be issued as long as the custodian can be reached by service of process, see Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court, 410 U.S. 484, 495 (1973). Thus, the emerging majority view, relying on these two cases, is that the writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum may be issued extraterritorially. See ITEL Capital Corp. v. Dennis Mining Supply & Equip., Inc., 651 F.2d 405, 406-07 (5th Cir. 1981); Stone v. Morris, 546 F.2d 730, 737 (7th Cir. 1976), overruling Edgerly v. Kennelly, 215 F.2d 420 (7th Cir. 1954); Maurer v. Pitchess, 530 F. Supp. 77, 79 (C.D. Cal. 1981), aff'd in part and rev'd in part, 755 F.2d 936 (9th Cir. 1985); Ball v. Woods, 402 F. Supp. 803, 807 (N.D. Ala. 1975), modified mem., 541 F.2d 279 (5th Cir. 1976).


10. 28 U.S.C. § 2243 (1982). At common law, the person to whom the writ was directed could “return no satisfactory excuse for not bringing up the body of the prisoner.” 3 W. Blackstone, Commentaries *132. Congress has followed the common law. See 28 U.S.C. § 2243 (1982); see also Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1286 (3d Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion) (noting “obligation of state custodians to respond to witness process.”), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985); McGee v. Rankin, 584 F. Supp. 1202, 1205 (W.D. Ark. 1984) (obligation to produce prisoners must be borne by custodian); United States ex rel. Griffin v. McMann, 310 F. Supp. 72, 73 (E.D.N.Y. 1970) (“duty to produce the prisoner lies upon the Warden and the State”); cf. Story v. Robinson, 689 F.2d 1176, 1181 (3d Cir. 1982) (“state custodians will be in compliance with writs of habeas corpus ad testificandum . . . if they transport the prisoners to the county jail nearest the federal courthouse”).

If the custodian fails to respond, he may face contempt charges. Cf. Ex parte Young, 50 F. 526, 526-27 (C.C.E.D. Tenn. 1892) (custodian of child held in contempt for failure to produce child in court pursuant to a writ of habeas corpus); United States v. Williamson, 28 F. Cas. 682, 686 (E.D. Pa. 1855) (No. 16,725) (custodian of slave held in contempt for failure to produce slave in court pursuant to writ of habeas corpus). Moreover, the custodian, as an officer of the state, must obey the mandates of the federal judiciary pursuant to the supremacy clause, U.S. Const. art. VI, cl. 2. See Cooper v. Aaron, 358 U.S. 1, 18-19 (1958); Sterling v. Constantin, 287 U.S. 378, 397-98 (1932); cf. United
tory authorization for a writ of habeas corpus ordering a state custodian to produce a prisoner to prosecute his claim pro se. 11 Under these circumstances, the court may, pursuant to the All Writs Act, 12 issue a writ of mandamus directing the custodian to produce the prisoner in court. 13

The decision to order the transfer of a prisoner is within the discretion of the trial court. 14 The court may consider the state’s interests in maintaining confinement 15 and minimizing disruption of prison routine, 16 as well as the costs of transferring an indigent prisoner to court. 17 This cost

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12. 28 U.S.C. § 1651(a) (1982) provides that “[t]he Supreme Court and all courts established by Act of Congress may issue all writs necessary or appropriate in aid of their respective jurisdictions and agreeable to the usages and principles of law.”
13. See supra note 8.
15. Jerry v. Francisco, 632 F.2d 252, 255 (3d Cir. 1980) (per curiam); Stone v. Morris, 546 F.2d 730, 736 (7th Cir. 1976); Moeck v. Zajackowski, 541 F.2d 177, 180 (7th Cir. 1976).

This focus on costs is unfortunate because if the court is protecting constitutional
factor has caused discontent among state custodians, who claim that they

rights, it should not consider the costs of transporting the prisoner. See Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977). A court should not determine that the prisoner's testimony would actually assist it in its fact-finding capacity, and then "be deterred from obtaining the prisoner because the state is unable to pay the full costs of witness production and because the similarly strapped Marshals Service is itself hard pressed to shoulder any such burden." Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1291 (3d Cir. 1984) (Becker, J., concurring), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985).

Although some district courts have refused to issue the writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum and have then dismissed the complaint when the prisoner failed to appear to prosecute his claim, this result has consistently been held to be erroneous because it constitutes a denial of "[a]dequate access to the courts." Spears v. Chandler, 672 F.2d 834, 835 (11th Cir. 1982) (per curiam); see Holt v. Pitts, 619 F.2d 558, 562 (6th Cir. 1980) (court "clearly abused its discretion when it dismissed plaintiff's action for failure to prosecute"); Heidelberg v. Hammer, 577 F.2d 429, 431 (7th Cir. 1978) ("dismissal of the action could not properly be based on the fact that the plaintiff failed to come to court"). See supra note 5.


The Supreme Court in Price v. Johnston, 334 U.S. 266 (1948), noted some considera-
are unable alone to bear the costs of transportation. In an attempt to reduce this burden, many custodians have petitioned federal courts to order the United States Marshals Service to assist in producing inmates. Several courts, relying on various statutory authorities, have
tions for determining whether to order the production of a prisoner to argue a case personally:

If it is apparent that the request of the prisoner to argue personally reflects something more than a mere desire to be freed temporarily from the confines of the prison, that he is capable of conducting an intelligent and responsible argument, and that his presence in the courtroom may be secured without undue inconvenience or danger, the court would be justified in issuing the writ. But if any of those factors were found to be negative, the court might well decline to order the prisoner to be produced.

Id. at 284-85 (footnote omitted).

Thus, before exercising its discretion, the court should be certain that the issues raised are substantive and that a courtroom appearance would be clearly useful to a determination of the facts.

The court may also consider other less costly and less dangerous alternatives, including use of depositions. See Heidelberg v. Hammer, 577 F.2d 429, 431 (7th Cir. 1978); Ball v. Woods, 402 F. Supp. 803, 811 (N.D. Ala. 1975), modified mem., 541 F.2d 279 (5th Cir. 1976); Silver v. Dunbar, 264 F. Supp. 177, 181 (S.D. Cal. 1967). This option may be unsatisfactory when issues of credibility are to be determined, see Heidelberg v. Hammer, 577 F.2d 429, 431 (7th Cir. 1978), presumably because the finder of fact will be unable to observe the witness’ demeanor. The parties may also agree to hold the trial without jury at the prison. See Heidelberg v. Hammer, 577 F.2d 429, 431 (7th Cir. 1978). Alternatively, the court may delay the trial until the prisoner’s release. See id. This is a sensible alternative when the prisoner will be released within a reasonable time. When the plaintiff will be imprisoned for many more years or is seeking injunctive relief, however, this option is not viable. See id. Moreover, an indefinite stay of proceedings may constitute a denial of due process. See Wimberly v. Rogers, 557 F.2d 671, 673 (9th Cir. 1977); Maurer v. Pitchess, 530 F. Supp. 77, 81 (C.D. Cal. 1981), aff’d in part and rev’d in part, 755 F.2d 936 (1985). The statute of limitations may also pose a problem for the prisoner-plaintiff. The Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1982), does not provide a statute of limitations; therefore, “[t]he applicable period of limitations is that which the state itself would enforce had an action seeking similar relief been brought in a court of that state.”


In order to avoid the need for the prisoner’s presence when the prisoner seeks only to argue his case pro se, the court may appoint counsel for him, see 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (1982); Aldisert Report, supra note 4, at 12-13, or the prisoner may be able to secure counsel on a contingency fee basis, see Silver v. Dunbar, 264 F. Supp. 177, 181 (S.D. Cal. 1967). Given the low success rate of prisoner civil rights actions, see Ball v. Woods, 402 F. Supp. 803, 810 (N.D. Ala. 1975) (historically, few actions have succeeded), modified mem., 541 F.2d 279 (5th Cir. 1976); see also Aldisert Report, supra note 4, at 9-10 (in 1979, 96.5% of § 1983 actions were dismissed or otherwise concluded before trial), this may be an unrealistic option.


19. See supra note 18.
rendered such orders. These orders, which are in the nature of a mandamus, have been strongly opposed by the Marshals Service.

This Note examines the purported bases for the issuance of such orders and demonstrates that federal courts are not authorized to compel the Marshals Service to bear any costs for the production of state prisoners in federal court. Although this imposes an undue burden on the states, congressional action would be required to correct the imbalance.

I. STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF STATE PRISONERS

The United States Constitution states that “[n]o money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.” Federal courts, as courts of limited jurisdiction, possess only that power granted to them by either the Constitution or an act of Congress. Federal courts, therefore, may not order the United States Marshals Service to use federal funds to transport state prisoners without some express statutory authority.


23. U.S. Const. art I, § 9, cl. 7.


25. See Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1285 (3d Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion) (without statutory authority, such an order would constitute a "raid . . . on the United States Treasury"), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United
A. Statutes Dealing with the Powers of the Marshal

Several sections of the Judiciary Act delineate the powers of the United States marshal.26 One such section provides that the marshal of each district "may, in the discretion of the respective courts, be required to attend any session of court."27 Some courts have held this to be authority for the federal judiciary to order the Marshals Service to transport state prisoners.28 Although it "quite clearly authorizes the district court to require the attendance of the marshal at any judicial proceeding, including any proceeding at which the testimony of a state prisoner may be required,"29 the plain meaning of the statute necessitates the conclusion that it concerns only courthouse security.30 Indeed, protection of the judiciary is one of the primary functions of the Marshals Service.31

28. See, e.g., Ford v. Allen, 728 F.2d 1369, 1370 (11th Cir. 1984) (per curiam); Bald-}
31. "Since 1789 the United States has depended upon its own marshals for the security of its own court facilities, and few if any federal judges would be comfortable with any
Other sections of the Judiciary Act allow the United States marshal the expense of transporting prisoners, and provide that the marshal "shall execute all lawful writs, process and orders . . . of the United States." These sections, however, enumerate obligations of the United States marshal, who must obey the mandates of the federal courts and other arrangement. Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1287 (3d Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985); see In re Neagle, 39 F. 833, 861 (C.C.N.D. Cal. 1889) (duty of United States marshals to protect federal judges), aff'd, 135 U.S. 1 (1890); 28 C.F.R. § 0.111(d) (1984) (Director of United States Marshals Service responsible for courtroom security).

32. "Under regulations prescribed by the Attorney General, each United States marshal shall be allowed—it is the expense of transporting prisoners, including the cost of necessary guards and the travel and subsistence expense of prisoners and guards . . . ." 28 U.S.C. § 567(2) (1982); see also 28 C.F.R. § 0.111(j) (1984) (Marshals Service may transport prisoners under "cooperative or intergovernmental agreements"). Courts have found sufficient authority in these provisions to order the transportation of state prisoners. See, e.g., Ford v. Allen, 728 F.2d 1369, 1370 (11th Cir. 1984) (per curiam); Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977).

33. 28 U.S.C. § 569(b) (1982). Courts have relied on this section to impose the burden of transporting state prisoners on the Marshals Service. See Ford v. Allen, 728 F.2d 1369, 1370 (11th Cir. 1984) (per curiam); Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977).


Although 28 U.S.C. § 567(2) (1982), which allows for the expense of transporting prisoners, demonstrates that Congress envisioned the use of marshals for the transportation of prisoners, the statute is silent as to state prisoners. Even if Congress did intend to include state inmates, the statute requires that such transportation be made under the supervision of the Attorney General, not the federal judiciary. See 28 U.S.C. § 567(2) (1982); see also Story v. Robinson, 689 F.2d 1176, 1179-80 (3d Cir. 1982) (even if statute did encompass state prisoners, it does not authorize marshal to relieve state custodians of their obligations).


35. See Levy Court v. Ringgold, 30 U.S. (5 Pet.) 451, 454 (1831) (United States marshals are "mere ministerial officers, to execute process when put into their hands, and [are] not made the judges whether such process shall be issued."); United States ex rel. Brown v. Malcolm, 350 F. Supp. 496, 498 (E.D.N.Y. 1972) (when writ came into marshal's hands, it became his mandatory duty to execute it); 3 Op. Att'y Gen. 496, 498 (1840) (same).

In Ford v. Carballo, 577 F.2d 404 (7th Cir. 1978), the court issued a writ directing the production of a state prisoner to both the United States marshal and the state custodian. See id. at 405. When the marshal served the writ on the custodian, the marshal informed the custodian that the Marshals Service would not transport the prisoner. Id. at 405-06. Thereafter, the state custodian produced the prisoner. See id. at 406. The court noted that "[t]he fact that a controversy may have existed as to who should actually transport and suffer the expense of producing the prisoner had no effect upon the existing writ and did not authorize the Marshal to independently disregard a direct order of the court." Id. at 407.
is empowered to transport prisoners if the court so orders.\textsuperscript{36} The court's authority to issue an order such as a writ of mandamus, however, must itself derive from some other statutory source.\textsuperscript{37}

B. The All Writs Act

The All Writs Act (Act)\textsuperscript{38} authorizes the federal courts to issue "all writs necessary or appropriate in aid of their respective jurisdictions and agreeable to the usages and principles of law."\textsuperscript{39} The Act does not confer federal jurisdiction,\textsuperscript{40} but it does grant broad powers once jurisdiction has been established in some other manner.\textsuperscript{41} Because federal civil rights actions fall within federal jurisdiction,\textsuperscript{42} courts may, pursuant to the Act, issue orders to nonparties to the original action,\textsuperscript{43} including United

\textsuperscript{36} See \textit{supra} note 32 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{37} See \textit{supra} note 24 and accompanying text.
\textsuperscript{38} 28 U.S.C. § 1651(a) (1982).
\textsuperscript{39} Id.
\textsuperscript{41} See Adams v. United States \textit{ex rel.} McCann, 317 U.S. 269, 273 (1942) ("federal court may avail itself of all auxiliary writs as aids in the performance of its duties . . . to achieve the ends of justice entrusted to it"); Hamilton v. Nakai, 453 F.2d 152, 157 (9th Cir. 1971) ("once jurisdiction has attached, powers under § 1651(a) should be broadly construed"), \textit{cert. denied}, 406 U.S. 945 (1972); see, e.g., Harris v. Nelson, 394 U.S. 286, 299 (1969) (although Congress has not established fact-finding procedures for habeas corpus actions, courts may use the Act to "fashion appropriate modes of procedure" to accomplish discovery); Price v. Johnston, 334 U.S. 266, 284 (1948) (court may "issue an order in the nature of a writ of habeas corpus commanding that a prisoner be brought to the courtroom to argue his own appeal"); American Lithographic Co. v. Werckmeister, 221 U.S. 603, 608-09 (1911) (Act encompasses power to issue subpoena duces tecum); Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corp. v. NLRB, 120 F.2d 126, 127 (1st Cir. 1941) (court may issue subpoenas under the Act); Franklin v. Oregon, 563 F. Supp. 1310, 1333 (D. Or. 1983) ("It is well within the broad scope of the All Writs Act . . . for a district court to issue an order restricting the filing of meritless cases . . . ."); \textit{aff'd in part and rev'd in part on other grounds sub nom.} Franklin v. Murphy, 745 F.2d 1221 (9th Cir. 1984); Mississippi Valley Barge Line Co. v. United States, 273 F. Supp. 1, 6 (E.D. Mo. 1967) (federal courts have statutory "authority to enter such orders as may be necessary to enforce and effectuate their lawful orders and judgments, and to prevent them from being thwarted and interfered with by force, guile, or otherwise").

States marshals, if the burdens imposed by such orders are reasonable

44. United States marshals must obey the mandates of the federal courts. See supra note 35.

One court has held that the Act does not grant power to federal courts to order the Marshals Service to transport state prisoners. See Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1286 (3d Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985). The Opinion Announcing the Judgment of the Court followed a syllogism: Because writs of habeas corpus ad testificandum may be issued only to the custodian of the prisoner, any order to the United States Marshals Service to produce state prisoners must be a writ in the nature of a mandamus; under two hoary Supreme Court decisions, McClung v. Silliman, 19 U.S. (6 Wheat.) 598 (1821) and M'Intire v. Wood, 11 U.S. (7 Cranch) 504 (1813), federal courts are not empowered to issue writs of mandamus to officers of the executive branch; therefore, because United States marshals are members of the executive branch, federal courts may not compel them to produce prisoners. See Garland, 737 F.2d at 1286.

Although it has been said that the marshal "acts concurrently as an officer of the federal judiciary and as an executive officer," United States v. Krapf, 285 F.2d 647, 649 (3d Cir. 1960), the President appoints the marshal for each judicial district, see 28 U.S.C. § 561(a) (1982), and the Attorney General supervises the Marshals Service, Garland, 737 F.2d at 1291 (Becker, J., concurring); 28 U.S.C. § 569(c) (1982). Thus, United States marshals "belong emphatically to the executive department of the government." In re Neagle, 135 U.S. 1, 63 (1890); see Martin v. Tobin, 451 F.2d 1335, 1336 (9th Cir. 1971) (per curiam) (United States marshal is a purely executive officer who may be removed from office by the President at any time); Farley v. United States, 139 F. Supp. 757, 758 (Ct. Cl.) (same), cert. denied, 352 U.S. 891 (1956).

The Third Circuit's reliance on McClung and M'Intire, however, is misplaced.

Both cases involve the same plaintiff attempting to secure title to certain land in Ohio. See McClung v. Silliman, 19 U.S. (6 Wheat.) 598, 599 (1821); M'Intire v. Wood, 11 U.S. (7 Cranch) 504, 505 (1813). The question certified for review in M'Intire was whether the circuit court had the "power to issue a writ of mandamus to the [federal] register of a land-office in Ohio, commanding him to issue a final certificate of purchase to the plaintiff for certain lands in that state." Id. at 504-05 (emphasis in original). The Court held that § 14 of the Judiciary Act of 1789 (the predecessor of the current All Writs Act) conferred power only when it was "necessary" to the exercise of a court's jurisdiction. See id. at 505-06. Because the issue, possession of land, was essentially local and could be determined without issuance of the writ, it was not "necessary" to the court's jurisdiction for the writ to be issued. See id. Moreover, the Court stated, § 14 did not grant federal jurisdiction; thus, the court had no jurisdiction to hear the case at all. See id. M'Intire therefore does not apply to the issue at hand, because federal courts have jurisdiction over actions brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1982). See 28 U.S.C. § 1343(a)(3), (4) (1982).

After his setback in M'Intire, the plaintiff returned to Ohio and pursued two new courses of action: Again seeking a writ of mandamus, he sued in state court, see McClung v. Silliman, 19 U.S. (6 Wheat.) 598, 599 (1821), and in federal court, this time claiming federal diversity jurisdiction, see id. at 599-600. The state court found that it had jurisdiction, see id. at 599, but on the merits refused to issue the writ of mandamus, see id. at 599, 602. The Supreme Court affirmed the state court, but on jurisdictional grounds, holding that a state court may not issue a writ of mandamus against a federal executive officer, because of "the supremacy of the United States." Id. at 605.

Regarding the petitioner's claim of diversity jurisdiction, the Court interpreted M'Intire as holding simply that federal courts do not have the power to issue writs of mandamus to executive officers in original actions for mandamus. See id. at 600-02. Thus, in M'Intire the Court read the Act as not granting jurisdiction, and in McClung refused to find the jurisdiction to issue the writ, even though the Court already had federal diversity jurisdiction. "Why there would be no jurisdiction in such a case is a mystery that perhaps only those deeply schooled in the mindset of that era could solve." Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1290 & n.3 (3d Cir. 1984) (Becker, J., concurring) (resisting the temptation to interpret the case against the historic reluctance of the early
and the issuance of the writ is “necessary or appropriate” to the court’s

Court to act against “a hostile executive”), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985). Apparently the court did not have jurisdiction to hear the case because it did not have the power to grant writs of mandamus against executive officers in original actions for mandamus. Although the court had diversity jurisdiction, the action was nevertheless in the nature of an original mandamus action against an executive officer insofar as mandamus was the only remedy the plaintiff sought. See McClung, 19 U.S. (6 Wheat.) at 605.

M’Intire and probably McClung have since been legislatively overruled, see Perez v. Rhiddlehoover, 247 F. Supp. 65, 69 n.8 (E.D. La. 1965), by the Mandamus and Venue Act of 1962, 28 U.S.C. § 1361 (1982), which provides that “[t]he district court shall have original jurisdiction of any action in the nature of mandamus to compel an officer or employee of the United States or any agency thereof to perform a duty owed to the plaintiff.” Id. The writ will be issued only when the plaintiff has a clear right to relief, the defendant has a plainly defined duty to do the act in question, and no other remedy is available. See Schulke v. United States, 544 F.2d 453, 455 (10th Cir. 1976) (per curiam); Billiteri v. United States Bd. of Parole, 541 F.2d 938, 946 (2d Cir. 1976). The Mandamus and Venue Act was intended to correct a historical aberration whereby only federal courts in the District of Columbia could grant mandamus relief in an original action. See Byse & Fiocca, Section 1361 of the Mandamus and Venue Act of 1962 and “Nonstatutory” Judicial Review of Federal Administrative Action, 81 Harv. L. Rev. 308, 310-13 (1967). Federal courts have always had the power to mandamus executive officers when the writ’s issuance is ancillary to some other jurisdiction, see Rosenbaum v. Bauer, 120 U.S. 450, 453 (1887); Bath County v. Amy, 80 U.S. (13 Wall.) 244, 249 (1871); Kendall v. United States ex rel. Stokes, 37 U.S. (12 Pet.) 524, 616-18 (1838), as long as the writ was to compel a ministerial and not a discretionary act, id. at 616-18; see Wilbur v. United States ex rel. Kadrie, 281 U.S. 206, 218-19 (1930); United States ex rel. Riverside Oil Co. v. Hitchcock, 190 U.S. 316, 324 (1903); United States ex rel. Goodrich v. Guthrie, 58 U.S. (17 How.) 284, 303-04 (1854). United States marshals, when acting as officers of the court, perform ministerial functions. Levy Court v. Ringgold, 30 U.S. (5 Pet.) 451, 454 (1831); United States v. Persinger, 562 F. Supp. 557, 561 (W.D. Pa. 1982); see 3 Op. Att’y Gen. 496, 498 (1840). A court order to a United States marshal to produce a state prisoner in a § 1983 action is ancillary to pre-existing jurisdiction. See 28 U.S.C. § 1343(a)(3), (4) (1982).

45. In United States v. New York Tel. Co., 434 U.S. 159 (1977), the Supreme Court held that a district court did not abuse its discretion when it ordered a public utility to assist the Federal Bureau of Investigation to install pen registers on telephones for surveillance purposes, even though the telephone company was not a party to the action. See id. at 177-78. The Court noted that such an order would not be burdensome because it provided that the telephone company be “fully reimbursed at prevailing rates.” See id. at 175. New York Tel. establishes that the All Writs Act empowers federal courts to impose reasonable burdens on nonparties. See id. at 172-74; United States v. McHie, 196 F. 586, 588 (N.D. Ill. 1912); see, e.g., Application of United States, 610 F.2d 1148, 1155 (3d Cir. 1979) (not an unreasonable burden to order telephone companies to trace calls when companies are not to be compensated); Michigan Bell Tel. Co. v. United States, 565 F.2d 385, 389 (6th Cir. 1977) (same); United States v. Illinois Bell Tel. Co., 531 F.2d 809, 813-14 (7th Cir. 1976) (telephone company must make available its aid and know-how); cf. Mississippi Valley Barge Line Co. v. United States, 273 F. Supp. 1, 6 (E.D. Mo. 1967) (Act “applies whether or not the person charged with the violation of the judgment or decree was originally a party defendant to the action”), aff’d per curiam sub nom. Osborne v. Mississippi Valley Barge Line Co., 389 U.S. 579 (1968).

In his dissent in New York Tel., Justice Stevens argued that the holding was too broad and that its only precedent was the common law writ of assistance, which “authorized the indiscriminate search and seizure of undescribed persons or property based on mere suspicion.” New York Tel., 434 U.S. at 180 n.3 (Stevens, J., dissenting in part). “The use of that writ by the judges appointed by King George III was one British practice that the Revolution was specifically intended to terminate.” Id. at 190 (Stevens, J., dissenting in
jurisdiction. One court has interpreted this reasonableness standard as entitling the state—a nonparty to the proceedings—to reimbursement by the Marshals Service for the costs incurred by the state custodian in transporting a prisoner. The court reasoned that imposing any expense on the custodian was unreasonable, but failed to justify alleviating the burdens of one nonparty by placing them on another. In addition, although the state is not technically a party to the litigation, it has an interest in the outcome of the action. If the plaintiff prevails, the state

part). Justice Stevens' main concern was that the telephone company's assistance in securing the pen registers would not aid the court's jurisdiction. See id. Similarly, the United States marshal is not a party in cases involving the transportation of state prisoners; the marshal is, however, statutorily obligated to obey the federal judiciary. See 28 U.S.C. § 569(b) (1982). See supra notes 34-35 and accompanying text.


47. See Ford v. Carballo, 577 F.2d 404, 407-08 (7th Cir. 1978).

48. See id. The court reasoned that the state's interest was minimal because its "only real relationship to the federal proceeding is the fact that it has custody over the particular plaintiff." Id. at 408. Although the warden has an obligation to respond to the writ, "to additionally require that this be done at the state's own expense would present an unreasonable burden." Id. Therefore, the court ordered that the state be reimbursed. See id.; see also Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977) (although state has real interest in outcome of action, it does not so outweigh that of federal government in preserving civil rights that state should "be required to bear complete responsibility for the prisoners' transportation"). The court ignored that once the decision is made to transfer the prisoner, the cost will be placed on a nonparty, either the state or federal government, and the current statutory mechanism places the burden on the state custodian. See supra notes 8-10 and accompanying text.

49. The Civil Rights Act states that "[e]very person . . . shall be liable." 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1982) (emphasis added). The eleventh amendment provides that "[t]he Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States." U.S. Const. amend. XI. Thus, federal courts have no jurisdiction to hear suits against a state unless the state consents. See Edelman v. Jordan, 415 U.S. 651, 662-63 (1974); Georgia R.R. & Banking Co. v. Redwine, 342 U.S. 299, 304 & n.13 (1952); Ford Motor Co. v. Department of Treasury, 323 U.S. 459, 464 (1945); Hans v. Louisiana, 134 U.S. 1, 16 (1890). Local government units, which are not considered to be part of the state for eleventh amendment purposes, may be sued. See Monell v. New York City Dep't of Social Servs., 436 U.S. 658, 690 & n.54 (1978). A municipality cannot be held liable on a theory of respondeat superior, however. Id. at 691; see McCown v. City of Evanston, 534 F. Supp. 243, 246 (N.D. Ill. 1982). Rather, a local government employee must have acted under an official policy. See Monell, 436 U.S. at 694; Smith v. City of Oklahoma City, 696 F.2d 784, 786 (10th Cir. 1983); Occhino v. United States, 686 F.2d 1302, 1310 (8th Cir. 1982).

50. See McGee v. Ranklin, 584 F. Supp. 1202, 1205 (W.D. Ark. 1984) (because custodian is substantially involved with the litigation, it will be excused from its obligation only if it demonstrates an "extremely unreasonable burden"). But see Ford v. Carballo, 577 F.2d 404, 408 (7th Cir. 1978) ("interest of the state is minimal").
may be forced to expend its funds to improve conditions at its correctional facility\textsuperscript{51} or to indemnify its employees.\textsuperscript{52} Moreover, the defendants are alleged to have acted "under color of" state law.\textsuperscript{53}

The argument against unduly burdening a nonparty is better advanced by the Marshals Service. Its interest is less than that of the state because it is essentially indifferent to the outcome of the action,\textsuperscript{54} and its burden is greater because it has fewer resources available in each state for the long distance transfer of prisoners.\textsuperscript{55} More importantly, however, even if the burdens sought to be imposed on the Marshals Service were reasonable, the Act grants mandamus power only when "necessary or appropriate" to the court's jurisdiction\textsuperscript{56} and required to reach "rational ends of law."\textsuperscript{57} The Supreme Court has stated that what is "necessary or appropriate" to a court's jurisdiction may be determined by looking to common law analogies.\textsuperscript{58} Thus, for example, because there is no statutory

\textsuperscript{51} See Nadeau v. Helgemoe, 561 F.2d 411, 419 & n.7 (1st Cir. 1977). Although the eleventh amendment prohibits private parties from seeking to impose a liability to be paid from the state treasury, see supra note 49, prospective relief is permissible, see Milliken v. Bradley, 433 U.S. 267, 290 & n.22 (1977) (decrees mandating creation of vocational schools permissible); Edelman v. Jordan, 415 U.S. 551, 667-68 (1974) (prospective relief permissible even though it may have impact on state treasury); New York State Ass'n for Retarded Children, Inc. v. Carey, 631 F.2d 162, 165 (2d Cir. 1980) ("In the face of constitutional violations at a state institution, a federal court can order the state either to take the steps necessary to rectify the violations or to close the institution. Thus, a state cannot avoid the obligation of correcting the constitutional violations of its institutions simply by pleading fiscal inability."). Municipal Auth. v. Pennsylvania, 496 F. Supp. 686, 689 (M.D. Pa. 1980) (eleventh amendment only prohibits retrospective relief directing the state to pay money from its treasury). The eleventh amendment, therefore, "does not immunize the state prison from judicial supervision," even though the prospective relief may be costly. Nadeau v. Helgemoe, 561 F.2d 411, 419 & n.7 (1st Cir. 1977); see Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 828 (1977) (prison authority required to provide inmates with law library). See supra note 4.

\textsuperscript{52} See C. Bartollas, supra note 4, at 273.


\textsuperscript{54} "[T]he Marshals Service... is only related to the litigation by its federal status." McGee v. Rankin, 384 F. Supp. 1202, 1205 (W.D. Ark. 1974). But see Ballard v. Spradley, 57 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1937) ("rights invoked are federal in nature"). In addition, the federal interest may be limited because custody itself is not at issue. Seybold v. Milwaukee County Sheriff, 276 F. Supp. 484, 487 (E.D. Wis. 1967).

\textsuperscript{55} The President appoints one United States marshal for each judicial district. See 28 U.S.C. § 561(a) (1982). There are presently over 90 judicial districts. See 28 U.S.C. § 133 (1982). Approximately 1600 Deputy United States marshals are scattered throughout these districts. The District of Columbia District, with 120, employs the most deputy marshals. Telephone interview with William Dempsey, Public Information Officer, United States Marshals Service (Mar. 8, 1985).

In contrast, state prisons employ a large number of correctional officers. In 1981, for example, Illinois employed 3667 correctional officers; California, 3603; Texas, 3044; Maryland, 1552; Alabama, 1040; Connecticut, 920; North Dakota, 94. Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics—1982, Table 1.65, at 136-37 (1983).

\textsuperscript{56} 28 U.S.C. § 1651(a) (1982).

\textsuperscript{57} Adams v. United States ex rel. McCann, 317 U.S. 269, 273 (1942).

TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS

authority for a writ of habeas corpus ordering the custodian to produce a
prisoner to prosecute his claim pro se, a federal court may, pursuant to
the Act, issue a writ of mandamus. 59 The writ should be directed to the
state custodian because at common law the only means of securing a
prisoner's presence was to issue a writ of habeas corpus, 60 to which it was
the custodian's duty to respond. 61

Similarly, when a state prisoner's in-court testimony is required, the
writ of mandamus to the Marshals Service is not "necessary or appropriate"
to the court's jurisdiction because there is another method for secur-
ing the prisoner's presence: the writ of habeas corpus ad testificandum. 62
It does not become "necessary or appropriate" to the court's jurisdiction
to impose costs on the Marshals Service simply because the state claims
that it lacks funds to transport a prisoner. 63 "The fact that a party may
be better able to effectuate its rights or duties if a writ is issued never has
been ... a sufficient basis for issuance of the writ." 64 Mandamus is an
extraordinary remedy to be used when no other option exists. 65

Although section 1983 of the Civil Rights Act 66 creates rights that are

59. In Price v. Johnston, 334 U.S. 266 (1948), the Supreme Court held that a federal
court could, pursuant to the Act, order a federal prisoner to be produced in court to
argue his habeas corpus appeal. In determining whether such an order would be "necessary"
to a court's jurisdiction, the court compared it to the common law writs of habeas
corpus. See id. at 281-84.

60. See supra note 8.
61. See supra note 10.
63. See supra notes 56-60 and accompanying text.
64. United States v. New York Tel. Co., 434 U.S. 159, 189 (1977) (Stevens, J., dis-
senting in part). The writ should be issued to aid the court's duties and jurisdiction, not
to reduce burdens placed on others. See id.; see also Harris v. Nelson, 394 U.S. 286, 299
(1969) (courts may fashion appropriate modes of procedure to aid their habeas corpus
jurisdiction); cf., e.g., FTC v. Dean Foods Co., 384 U.S. 597, 604 (1966) (injunction under
Act used to "prevent impairment of the effective exercise of appellate jurisdiction"); ITT
Community Dev. Corp. v. Barton, 569 F.2d 1351, 1359 (5th Cir. 1978) ("conduct not
shown to be detrimental to the court's jurisdiction ... could not have been enjoined
under the Act"); Commercial Sec. Bank v. Walker Bank & Trust Co., 456 F.2d 1352,
1355-56 (10th Cir. 1972) (order restraining sheriff's sale reversed because order did not
aid court's jurisdiction).

Therefore, an interpretation of the Act as a grant of authority to transfer to the United
States Treasury the cost of complying with writs of habeas corpus ad testificandum is
without support. "Any other interpretation of section 1651 would permit district courts
to impose the expenses of litigation upon the Treasury of the United States whenever that
seemed to the court to be a good idea." Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1286-87 (3d
Cir. 1984) (plurality opinion), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction

65. "[I]f a court is able to effect a full and complete resolution of the issues before it
without resorting to the extraordinary measures contemplated under the Act, then such
measures cannot be employed." ITT Community Dev. Corp. v. Barton, 569 F.2d 1351,
1359 (5th Cir. 1978); see Allied Chem. Corp. v. Daiflon, Inc., 449 U.S. 33, 34 (1980) (per
curiam) ("mandamus is ... to be invoked only in extraordinary situations"); cf. Ex parte
Pahey, 332 U.S. 258, 259 (1947) ("Mandamus, prohibition and injunction against judges
are drastic and extraordinary remedies.").

federal in nature, the claim flows from the state-imposed incarceration or other action. The state must therefore bear ultimate responsibility for the transportation costs of indigent prisoners unless Congress decides that federal aid is appropriate. Courts are without power to order federal aid because that determination is one which Article I of the Constitution expressly leaves to Congress.

II. A Proposed Compromise

One court, recognizing the budgetary constraints that have arisen in many states and the federal government, has ordered the state to deliver the inmate to the state or county prison facility closest to the United

67. The Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1982), is important to "our constitutional scheme." Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 579 (1974); see Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977) (rights invoked are federal in nature); Aldisert Report, supra note 4, at 11 ("A significant number of conditions-of-confinement complaints raise constitutional questions of great importance.").


In Johnson v. Hubbard, 698 F.2d 286 (6th Cir.), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 282 (1983), the district court had dismissed an indigent's action for failure to prosecute because the indigent could not pay his witness fees. See id. at 288. As the court of appeals noted, "[i]t is paradoxical to provide an indigent plaintiff with the right to proceed in court, then deny him a meaningful chance to exercise that right by not providing him assistance in paying routine costs in so exercising that right." Id. at 291. The court nevertheless upheld the dismissal because there was no statutory basis on which to award a payment of witness fees. See id. But see United States ex rel. Helwig v. Cavell, 171 F. Supp. 417, 423-24 (W.D. Pa. 1959) (allowing payment of witness fees), aff'd sub nom. United States ex rel. Helwig v. Maroney, 271 F.2d 329 (3d Cir. 1959), cert. denied, 362 U.S. 954 (1960).

As a matter of comity, it may be argued that "[t]o charge the states for actions brought in the federal courts, as well as for actions brought in the state courts, would be inequitable. Each sovereign should assume responsibility for the conduct of in forma pauperis litigation within its own court system." United States ex rel. Griffin v. McMann, 310 F. Supp. 72, 75 (E.D.N.Y. 1970); cf. Bounds v. Smith, 430 U.S. 817, 835 (1977) (Burger, C.J., dissenting) (doubtful proposition that federal government can grant rights to citizens by statute and then impose costs on state as a constitutional matter).

70. See U.S. Const. art. I, § 9, cl. 7. One court has noted that there is no authority for the proposition that the question of who should pay for a state prisoner's presence is to be determined by reference to the varying interests of the parties that may be held responsible for these costs. Instead, the proper inquiry is whether Congress ever authorized reimbursement for the costs of compliance with a writ.

Wiggins v. County of Alameda, 717 F.2d 466, 469 (9th Cir. 1983), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 1425 (1984). Indeed, the balancing of these burdens is a task more appropriate for Congress than for the courts. See Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1292 (3d Cir. 1984) (Becker, J., concurring), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985).


States courthouse requiring the prisoner's presence.73 The federal marshal was then responsible for delivering the prisoner to court and later returning him to the same facility.74

Although under present law courts are without power to issue such orders, this splitting of costs and responsibility is fair to both parties. The state is not unduly burdened when it transfers a prisoner from one state facility to another; such transfers occur regularly.75 Nor is a great burden imposed on the United States marshal, as it is unlikely that he will have to travel out of the municipality in which he is stationed.76 Transfer of custody will take place at a prison, not at a courthouse or some other neutral location, thereby minimizing security risks.77 Moreover, if costs are divided, courts will be less likely to consider financial burdens when deciding whether to order the production of a prisoner.78 The result would be to enhance courts' fact-finding abilities.79

The ideal resolution would be for the states and the Marshals Service to reach an agreement among themselves.80 The Marshals Service is already empowered to enter into intergovernmental agreements for transporting prisoners.81 In the absence of an agreement, congressional action

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73. See Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977); Aldisert Report, supra note 4, at 16 n.29.
74. See Ballard v. Spradley, 557 F.2d 476, 481 (5th Cir. 1977). This was the custom in at least one district. See Story v. Robinson, 689 F.2d 1176, 1178 (3d Cir. 1982).
76. The federal courts are located in major cities, see 28 U.S.C. §§ 81-131 (1982), where there are likely to be local jails and holding facilities.
77. Risk of escape and harm to the public is one of the factors courts consider when deciding whether to order the production of prisoners. See supra note 17.
79. See Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1291-92 (3d Cir. 1984) (Becker, J., concurring) (to deny such orders because of costs may hinder “the ability of the federal courts to find facts accurately” and so “impair the vindication of civil rights”), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985).
80. See Wiggins v. County of Alameda, 717 F.2d 466, 469 (9th Cir. 1983) (per curiam) (decrying the inability of state and federal governments to reach a fair resolution of the matter), cert. denied, 104 S. Ct. 1425 (1984).
CONCLUSION

Federal courts may require the presence of state prisoners at civil rights trials. Under present law, the state must bear the cost and responsibility of producing a prisoner in court. This unfairly burdens the states because the prisoner is pursuing a federally based claim. The states and the United States Marshals Service should agree to share expenses. Failing that, Congress should grant courts the flexibility to apportion costs to the Marshals Service. Such flexibility would enhance the fact-finding abilities of the federal courts and thereby further the vindication of state prisoners' civil rights.

Mark K. Dietrich

82. See Garland v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1283, 1292 (3d Cir. 1984) (Becker, J., concurring) (suggesting that Congress consider this issue), cert. granted sub nom. Pennsylvania Bureau of Correction v. United States Marshals Serv., 105 S. Ct. 1166 (1985). Any congressional action should give courts sufficient flexibility in mediating the financial problems of the sovereigns. Cf. id. (Becker, J., concurring) (flexibility and creativity in mediating financial problems of state and federal governments should be encouraged); Taylor v. Gibson, 529 F.2d 709, 717 (5th Cir. 1976) (courts should develop “imaginative and innovative methods of dealing with the flood of prisoner complaints and suits”).