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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

RODNEY BERNARD BARNO,
Petitioner,
vs.
ROBERT J HERNANDEZ,
Respondent.

CASE NO. 08cv2439 WQH (AJB)

ORDER

HAYES, Judge:

The matters before the Court are the Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction (Doc. # 8) filed by Petitioner Rodney Barno, and the Report and Recommendation (Doc. # 13) filed by Magistrate Judge Anthony J. Battaglia.

Background

On December 31, 2008, Petitioner initiated this action by filing the petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. section 2254 (Doc. # 1). On December 31, 2008, Petitioner also filed a motion to stay (Doc. # 2) the habeas proceedings to permit Petitioner to exhaust his claims. On January 9, 2009, the Magistrate Judge set a briefing schedule for the motion to stay, which required Respondent to file a response on or before February 9, 2009, and stated that Petitioner may file a reply on or before February 23, 2009 (Doc. # 4).

On January 30, 2009, Petitioner filed the Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction (“Motion for TRO”). Petitioner contends that he attempted to gain access to the law library in order to meet the February 23, 2009 deadline to file his reply, but

1 was denied access. Petitioner requests a temporary restraining order permitting him access to
2 the law library and the courts. In the Motion for TRO, Petitioner also contends that the law
3 library is inadequate because it does not have updated legal materials, and that he was
4 wrongfully denied free copies, which should have been provided due to his indigent status.

5 On February 10, 2009, the Magistrate Judge issued an order granting Respondent's and
6 Petitioner's motions for extension of time (Doc. # 14), which provided that Respondent shall
7 file an opposition to the motion to stay on or before March 9, 2009, and that Petitioner may file
8 a reply to the opposition on or before March 23, 2009.

9 On February 10, 2009, the Magistrate Judge issued the Report and Recommendation
10 ("R&R"), which recommended that this Court deny the Motion for TRO. The R&R stated that
11 the "constitutional right of access requires a state to provide a law library or legal assistance
12 only during the pleading stage of a habeas or civil rights action." *R&R*, p. 3. The R&R
13 concluded that "[s]ince the Petitioner was attempting to research and file a reply with regard
14 to his motion to stay the instant federal petition, this falls outside the scope of the right of
15 access to the courts." *Id.* The R&R further concluded that Petitioner failed to show that he has
16 suffered or will suffer actual injury. The R&R reasoned that Petitioner's request for injunctive
17 relief, filed on January 30, 2009, was premature because "any additional research for the
18 optional reply would not be necessary until after the Respondents had filed their opposition on
19 February 9, 2009." *Id.* at 4. The R&R concluded that "Petitioner has not provided sufficient
20 proof of his financial situation that he is entitled to 'free copies' pursuant to Cal. Code Regs.
21 tit. 15, § 3162(a)." *Id.* The R&R concluded that Petitioner's argument that the materials in
22 the law library are dated is without merit because "Petitioner has failed to provide any
23 evidence that he has been denied [] access to court." *Id.* Based on the foregoing, the R&R
24 recommends that this Court deny the Motion for TRO. The R&R states that any objections
25 to the R&R must be filed on or before March 2, 2009, and that any reply to the objections shall
26 be filed on or before March 16, 2009.

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1 issuing a TRO is similar to the standard for issuing a preliminary injunction, and requires that
2 the party seeking relief show either “(1) a combination of likelihood of success on the merits
3 and the possibility of irreparable harm, or (2) that serious questions going to the merits are
4 raised and the balance of hardships tips sharply in favor of the moving party.” *Homeowners*
5 *Against the Unfair Initiative v. Calif. Building Industry Assoc.*, Civil No. 06CV152 JAH
6 (WMc), 2006 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 97023, *4 (S.D. Cal. Jan. 26, 2006) (citing *Immigrant*
7 *Assistance Project of the L.A. County of Fed’n of Labor v. INS*, 306 F.3d 842, 873 (9th Cir.
8 2002)). “[T]hese two formulations represent two points on a sliding scale in which the
9 required degree of irreparable harm increases as the probability of success decreases.” *Dep’t*
10 *Parks & Rec. of Calif. v. Bazaar Del Mundo, Inc.*, 448 F.3d 1118, 1123 (9th Cir. 2006)
11 (citations omitted). The underlying purpose of a temporary restraining order is to preserve the
12 status quo and prevent irreparable harm before a preliminary injunction hearing may be held.
13 *Granny Goose Foods, Inc. v. Bhd. of Teamsters & Auto Truck Drivers*, 415 U.S. 423, 439
14 (1974); *see also Reno Air Racing Ass’n v. McCord*, 452 F.3d 1126, 1130-31 (9th Cir. 2006).


15 Ruling of the Court

16 The Court has reviewed the R&R and the portions to which Petitioner objected de novo.
17 The Court concludes that the Magistrate Judge correctly concluded that Petitioner has not
18 shown that he has been denied access to the law library in violation of his constitutional rights,
19 and that Petitioner has not demonstrated that he has been denied the right to free copies of legal
20 documents. As the moving party, it is Petitioner’s burden to establish the likelihood of
21 success on the merits of his claim. The Court concludes that Petitioner has not demonstrated
22 that he is likely to succeed on the merits of these claims or that serious questions going to the
23 merits are raised. Furthermore, the Magistrate Judge has granted Petitioner’s request for an
24 extension of time to file a reply to the motion to stay. The Court concludes that Petitioner has
25 not demonstrated the possibility of irreparable harm or that the balance of hardships tips in his
26 favor. After reviewing the equities in this case, the Court concludes that Petitioner has not met
27 his burden of establishing a combination of likelihood of success on the merits and the
28 possibility of irreparable harm, or that serious questions going to the merits are raised and the

1 balance of hardships tips sharply in favor Petitioner. The Court has reviewed the entire record,
2 and concludes that Petitioner has failed to demonstrate that he is entitled to a temporary
3 restraining order under either test applied in the Ninth Circuit.

4 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Report and Recommendation (Doc. # 13) is
5 **ADOPTED**, and the Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction
6 (Doc. # 8) is **DENIED**.

7 DATED: March 17, 2009

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9 **WILLIAM Q. HAYES**
United States District Judge

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