

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

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|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| ROBERT SMALLWOOD, |) | CASE NO. 1:14 CV 115 |
| |) | |
| Plaintiff, |) | JUDGE DAN AARON POLSTER |
| |) | |
| v. |) | |
| |) | <u>MEMORANDUM OF OPINION</u> |
| UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, |) | <u>AND ORDER</u> |
| |) | |
| Defendants. |) | |

On January 17, 2014, plaintiff *pro se* Robert Smallwood, an inmate at Federal Correctional Institution at Victorville, filed this civil rights action against the United States of America. The complaint challenges plaintiff’s conviction in this court - for conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance¹ - on the ground that the court lacked jurisdiction over his prosecution. For the reasons stated below, this action is dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A.

A district court is expressly required to dismiss any civil action filed by a prisoner seeking relief from a governmental officer or entity, as soon as possible after docketing, if the court concludes that the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or if the plaintiff seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. §1915A; *Siller v. Dean*, No. 99-5323, 2000 WL 145167 , at *2 (6th Cir. Feb. 1, 2000).

Principles requiring generous construction of *pro se* pleadings are not without limits.

1 See U.S. v. Smallwood, N.D. Ohio Case No. 1:05 CR 327.

Beaudett v. City of Hampton, 775 F.2d 1274, 1277 (4th Cir. 1985). A complaint must contain either direct or inferential allegations respecting all the material elements of some viable legal theory to satisfy federal notice pleading requirements. *See Schied v. Fanny Farmer Candy Shops, Inc.*, 859 F.2d 434, 437 (6th Cir. 1988). District courts are not required to conjure up questions never squarely presented to them or to construct full blown claims from sentence fragments. *Beaudette*, 775 F.2d at 1278. To do so would "require ...[the courts] to explore exhaustively all potential claims of a *pro se* plaintiff, ... [and] would...transform the district court from its legitimate advisory role to the improper role of an advocate seeking out the strongest arguments and most successful strategies for a party." *Id.*

Even liberally construed, the complaint does not contain allegations reasonably suggesting plaintiff might have a valid federal claim. *See, Lillard v. Shelby County Bd. of Educ.*, 76 F.3d 716 (6th Cir. 1996)(court not required to accept summary allegations or unwarranted legal conclusions in determining whether complaint states a claim for relief). The Supreme Court has held that, when a prisoner challenges "the very fact or duration of his physical imprisonment, ... his sole federal remedy is a writ of habeas corpus." *Preiser v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 475, 501 (1973). Further, absent allegations that criminal proceedings terminated in plaintiff's favor or that a conviction stemming from the asserted violation of his rights was reversed, expunged by executive order, declared invalid by a state tribunal, or called into question by a federal court's issuance of a writ of habeas corpus, he may not recover damages for his claim. *Heck v. Humphrey*, 512 U.S. 477, 487 (1994).

Accordingly, this action is dismissed under section 1915A. Further, the court certifies, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3), that an appeal from this decision could not be taken in good faith.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/Dan Aaron Polster 3/12/14
DAN AARON POLSTER
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE