

Warden Burl Cain and/or Media Liason  
Louisiana State Penitentiary  
Angola, LA 70712  
Fax: (225) 655-2319

Dear Warden Burl Cain and/or Media Liason:

My name is James Ridgeway and I am a senior Washington correspondent for Mother Jones Magazine and website. Last year I sought permission to enter the prison to receive a tour, visit the hospice, and interview Warden Cain. I was told that I was refused on grounds that officials at Louisiana State Penitentiary were displeased with what was contained in one of my articles.

I plan to write a series of articles on Angola on the following topics, for publication in Mother Jones Magazine, its website [www.motherjones.com](http://www.motherjones.com), and Solitary Watch—[www.solitarywatch.wordpress.com](http://www.solitarywatch.wordpress.com)--, my own website, for the purpose of providing the public with information regarding one of America's most famous prisons. I now request the following:

- a) to enter and tour the prison, including the different areas of confinement, i.e. closed cell and dormitories; to interview appropriate officials who can explain the types of confinement, rules pertaining to entrance and exit, and other regulations pertaining thereto
- b) to speak to a prison official about the bible college and the programs available for primary, secondary and higher education;
- c) to interview prison ministers, inmate ministers, members of various faiths including Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and to speak to inmates working in the hospice; to visit the hospice;
- d) to attend religious services at the prison;
- f) to speak with an official to obtain information on the agricultural, industrial and other business activities ongoing at the prison, including annual and other reports showing income and expenses, customers of various services and products manufactured, produced or grown at the prison; as well as the records of donations and other income and expenses and other payments of the Chapel Fund and the Inmate Welfare Fund;

- g) to interview the Warden Cain on the general subject of the goals of Angola and the role of religion at Angola.

I understand that all of the above cannot occur on one day. I would like to visit Angola over several days within the next two months, however the dates and times of my arrival and departure flexible during that time period.

Also, if you choose to deny any of the request, please write me with the reason for the denial. Also, if you believe there are problems with any of the above requests, please convey those difficulties in writing. Finally, if you can honor one of the above, but not all, please convey in writing which of the above you can accommodate.

The best way to contact me is on my cell, [REDACTED] or via email, [REDACTED]. If you need to confirm my media credentials, please feel free to contact Monika Bauerlein, co-editor in chief at Mother Jones [REDACTED]. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

James Ridgeway