

1111  
DAIL CONDITIONS

*Benton  
County Jail*

**aclu**

**AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION/Eastern Missouri**  
4557 LACLEDE AVENUE • ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63108 • (314) 381-2111

May 2, 1986

[Redacted]  
Tipton, Mo.

Dear Mr. [Redacted]:

I have your letter of May 2. I also reviewed your previous correspondence with its accompanying letters and also Mr. Little's reply to you.

Explanations are cold comfort to people who are suffering. I am afraid, however, that you were indeed wrong in building up hope in prisoners that ACLU is the miracle needed to clean up the jail and county officials.

Mr. [Redacted], if we had a million dollars or even a small part of that sum we could do a lot more than we are doing now. Lawsuits are expensive and time consuming and currently we are using volunteer lawyers who give their time when we wage a case. We are neither oblivious to your problems nor are we in cahoots with the offending officials.

Currently we are in the process of collecting data about the jails in the state so that when we are able to do the job right we will have a strong case to close up a bad jail (and there are many equally as bad or worse). We cannot sue every jail in the state. If we get one good example others will have to improve or face the precedent of the decision we have won.

I can only reiterate that with our resources we are doing our best. Clearly we will not be in time to help you or your fellow prisoners. I know this doesn't make your situation any better. So many of our cases take years to go through the courts. It is an evil of our justice system. But I do want you to know we're working at it.

*Joyce Armstrong  
Legal Assistant*

Lawrence Katzenstein, President • Joyce Armstrong, Executive Director

1985-810