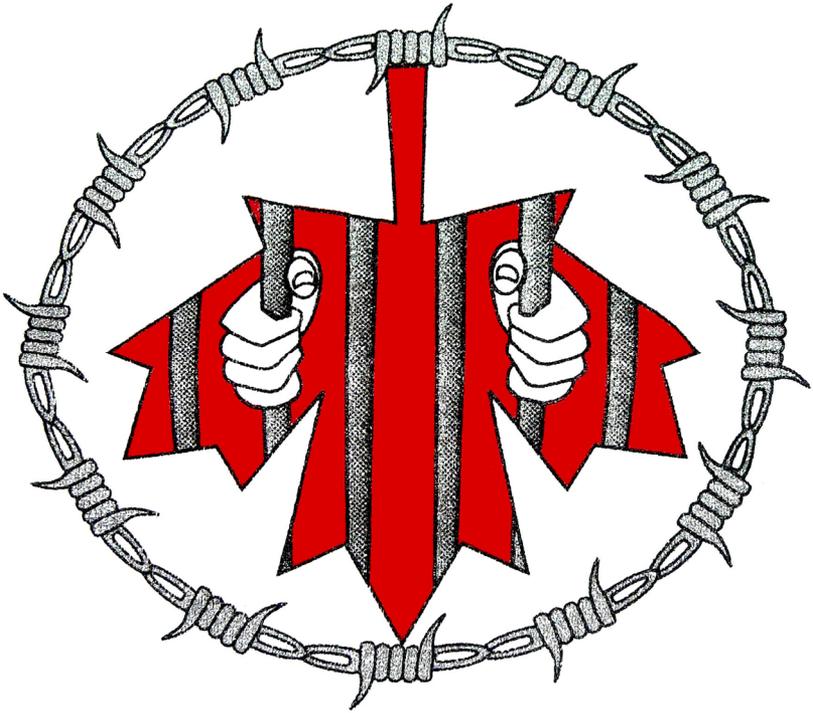


PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY



- AUGUST 10 -



**CLASS ACTION! NEWS
ISSUE 6 : SUMMER 2017**



< Editor's Note >

It is Summer & Issue #6 of 'Class Action News'. This magazine is by & for the Prisoner Class in Canada.



In every Issue we strive to provide a safe space for creative expression and literacy development. These zines feature art, poetry, stories, news, observations, concerns, and anything of interest to share.

Health & Harm Reduction info will always be provided – Be Safe!

Quality & Quantity:

Items printed are those that are common for diverse readers, so no religious items please.

Artwork: Black pen (tat-style) works the best.

Cover Artist will receive a \$25 donation.

Writings: only short poems, news, stories, ...

Items selected are those that fit nicely & allow space for others (1/2 page = 350 words max).

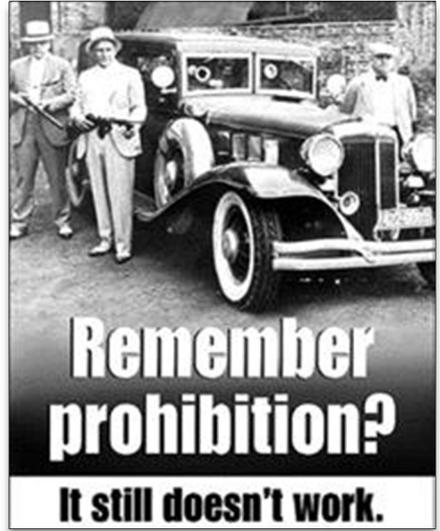
For author protection, letters & story credits will all be 'Anonymous'.

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Cover: Anonymous



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Thanks out to: Christine B, Elliot S.

Freedom is not something that anybody can be given. Freedom is something people take, and people are as free as they want to be. - James Baldwin

< *Letters* >**A Recipe for Recidivism**

Prisoners get released from Remand without a dime in their pocket.

They are not even given the balance of their prescriptions (paid for) that they were on while in custody.

This situation forces new releases into crime to pay for the meds that they were given inside.

If they cannot get those meds, then they are pushed into getting illegal drugs which may even kill them.

This Release Policy is a set-up for people to fail.

Some come back inside within one week or even that very same day!

Simply supplying an interim prescription and \$20 cash would go a long way in reducing recidivism in the Remand pop.

- Anonymous

< *News* >**Government seeks to adjourn solitary-confinement lawsuit until Bill C-56 is finalized**

Ottawa is acknowledging that proposed legislation designed to restrict the use of solitary confinement in Canada's federal prisons could face new lawsuits, and a constitutional challenge into the practice should be adjourned until the bill is finalized.

Government lawyer Mitchell Taylor said an adjournment of the trial, scheduled to start on July 4, would allow Parliament to "consider, explain and debate" the new solitary bill tabled this week. It would also prevent an unnecessary expenditure of judicial resources.

"The adjournment will preserve judicial resources by not adjudicating an existing statutory scheme that's likely to be replaced by a very different one," Mr. Taylor said in B.C. Supreme Court on Friday. "There could well be further litigation about that new regime. That's the proper time when the issues, the inadequacies, the adequacies, the good, the bad and everything else should be addressed."

However, the BC Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) and the John Howard Society of

Canada - which first sued the federal government over the matter in January, 2015 - argue that prisoners are being left to languish in solitary for indefinite periods, awaiting proposed legislation that may never pass into law.

Joseph Arvay, lawyer for the plaintiffs, said proposed legal or policy changes are no reason to adjourn the trial, as "we are asking the court to adjudicate existing legislation."

An adjournment would mean inmates currently in indefinite, prolonged solitary confinement would continue to deteriorate, Mr. Arvay said. "We're saying to them, 'Well, government's introduced a bill.'"

Further, the proposed bill, which does not include hard caps or an independent external review mechanism with real powers, still does not comply with the Constitution, he said.

Justice Peter Leask reserved his decision; the parties are due back in court on Tuesday.

The *Globe and Mail* has reported extensively on the prevalence and devastating effects of solitary confinement, referred to as administrative segregation by the Correctional Service of Canada. On Monday, the Liberal government tabled Bill C-56, which, along with other changes, would impose presumptive time limits on how long an inmate can be kept in solitary. However, critics note that a prison warden can still command otherwise.

The Liberal government said one objective of Bill C-56 is to prevent inmates with mental health issues from being placed in conditions that would exacerbate their illness.

The legislation states that an inmate can spend no more than 21 consecutive days in solitary unless a senior prison official specifically orders otherwise. Eighteen months after the bill's passage, that cap would drop from 21 days to 15 days, a threshold recommended in the UN's Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, also known as Mandela Rules.

An independent external reviewer, appointed by the Minister of Public Safety, would review the cases of inmates ordered to stay in solitary beyond the cap. However, the reviewer would have no power to release them.

Andrea Woo
Globe and Mail
Jun 23, 2017

Ombudsman report slams New Brunswick prison for inmate's death

As correctional officers locked down Dorchester Penitentiary for the night, Matthew Hines, a gigantic inmate with a history of mental illness, could be heard saying "don't let them kill me" and "don't let them end my life."

Two hours later, he was declared dead.

A report from federal Correctional Investigator Ivan Zinger released on Tuesday narrates in detail the "staff errors and omissions" that contributed to Mr. Hines's demise at the federal prison, located 42 kilometres southeast of Moncton, on May 26, 2015. Its conclusion is damning and far-reaching: Correctional Service Canada (CSC) failed Mr. Hines, his family and the public from the moment officers tackled him that night on through to misleading public explanations and, finally, to an absence of accountability for a "preventable" death.

"Nearly everything that could have gone wrong in a use of force response went wrong," the report states.

At 10:11 p.m., Mr. Hines, who was serving a five-year sentence for bank robbery and other crimes, was headed to his cell for the night when he turned around and started talking with a correctional officer, according to the report.

The nature of the exchange is absent from the report, but two more officers appeared quickly. They wrestled the 33-year-old man to the floor and began pounding his torso and head with knees and fists. A bloody wound opened up on the left side of Mr. Hines's face.

The tussle ceased, only to begin again three minutes later. Mr. Hines fell to the floor once again, face down, hands cuffed behind his back. Even though five correctional officers appeared to have the inmate under control, one officer pepper-sprayed Mr. Hines's face. Within minutes, the report notes, 13 officers surrounded the prisoner, but no one took control and no one alerted medical staff.

As several officers "frog-marched" Mr. Hines backward to the segregation unit, one officer twice rushed in to shoot bursts of pepper spray "seemingly without warning or reason, directly in Matthew's face," the report states.

The situation grew more dire. The officers moved Mr. Hines to a shower stall, where he fell backward against a wall. He was pleading for help and had his shirt pulled over his head to

prevent him from spitting. With the water turned on, he began making spitting or choking sounds, at which point the water was turned off and his shirt pulled down. Mr. Hines then lapsed into convulsions. At some point, the water was turned back on. As he lay on the floor of the locked shower stall, he uttered, "please, I'm begging."

They would be his last known words.

The officers dragged Mr. Hines from the stall by his feet. His lack of movement didn't seem to bother a duty nurse who appeared on the scene but didn't check the inmate's vital signs.

By 10:31 p.m., someone had called 911 for an ambulance. Paramedics arrived 21 minutes later and loaded the writhing patient into an ambulance at 11:01 p.m. A doctor in Moncton declared him dead an hour later.

Later that night, staff were ordered to clean up Mr. Hines's bloodstains. RCMP officers arrived an hour and a half later to find a contaminated crime scene.

The CSC told Mr. Hines's family he'd died of a seizure.

In all, the Correctional Investigator found 21 legal and policy violations, seven of them major, including failure to protect a person handcuffed from behind from injury, failure to designate a leader during a security response, inappropriate use of pepper spray, failure to provide emergency health care and failure to maintain the integrity of a crime scene.

The ombudsman also questioned a subsequent internal investigation process that resulted in no discipline for senior management.

The ombudsman did, however, credit the CSC for acknowledging staff errors and for eventually apologizing to the Hines family.

In a detailed response to the Correctional Investigator's findings, the CSC stated that it accepted the report's 10 recommendations and submitted a detailed action plan.

Patrick White
Globe and Mail
May 02, 2017

The way I see it, anyone who's proud of their country is either a thug or just hasn't read enough history yet.

- Richard K. Morgan

Nova Scotia records 192% jump in inmates awaiting trial

A threefold increase over 10 years in the number of people awaiting trial while in Nova Scotia jails is "extremely problematic," says a legal advocate.

According to a Statistics Canada report released Tuesday, the daily average increased from 112.5 to 328.5 people between fiscal years 2004-2005 and 2014-2015.

The 192 per cent increase was the largest in Canada.

"I think it's extremely problematic because the people who are remanded are presumed innocent and have not been convicted of any offence," said Megan Longley, executive director of Nova Scotia Legal Aid.

One of the roles of a judge in a criminal case is deciding whether the accused should be granted bail or remanded to custody until their next court appearance.

Nova Scotia also had the highest proportion of inmates (68 per cent) who were in jail on remand in the country for 2014-2015, while P.E.I. had the lowest (16 per cent).

Ten years earlier, the figure for Nova Scotia was 38 per cent.

Bail conditions too hard to meet

Longley is concerned that bail conditions are too difficult for some people to meet and as a result, they wind up back in custody as they await trial.

In some of those cases, people are set up to fail, she said.

"People who are vulnerable economically or who have mental health issues or things like that are going to have a harder time coming up with a surety, someone who can be responsible for them."

But Jennifer Stairs, a spokeswoman for the Nova Scotia Judiciary, said bail decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and may include considerations such as the criminal history of the accused and their behaviour in court.

"If bail is granted, the conditions are supposed to be the least restrictive deemed necessary to ensure attendance in court and good conduct of the accused person, pending resolution of the matter," she said in an email.

The jump in people being held on remand has raised some eyebrows at Province House. Acting attorney general Michel Samson said the

numbers will be discussed during the Justice Department's next meeting with the Public Prosecution Service.

He said the province will seek "a better explanation as to why the numbers here in Nova Scotia seem to be a bit higher than what we're seeing nationally."

He's not concerned at this point, he said, partly because the greater number of people on remand has not created additional pressures on the justice system.

Fewer criminal charges being laid in NS

The increase in remand occurs against a backdrop of fewer criminal charges being laid in Nova Scotia. Annual reports by the Public Prosecution Service show that 40,700 charges were laid in 2014-2015, a decrease from 44,569 in 2006-2007.

However, during this time, the number of homicides and attempted murders has increased.

"Those kinds of very serious, violent offences make up a very small proportion of the people who are charged at all and certainly serving remand," said Longley.

She said most people on remand are there for property and drug offences, as well as breaching bail conditions.

Overcrowding concerns

A 2008 Statistics Canada document raised a number of concerns about increased remand numbers, including "overcrowding and increased safety risks for both staff and inmates; higher transportation costs as more prisoners make court appearances, and increased staff costs as more prisoners need to be supervised."

In an emailed statement, Nova Scotia's Justice Department said that overcrowding is not a problem in the province's jails.

"We've undertaken significant work over the past several years to improve safety, better support staff and reduce incidents," said spokeswoman Sarah Gillis.

She said there's been a 70 per cent decrease in major incidents.

The Statistics Canada data also showed the daily average number of people serving sentences in Nova Scotia's jails decreased from 185.4 in 2004-2005 to 155.8 in 2014-2015.

Richard Woodbury
CBC News
Jan 12, 2017

Prison should never come between a Mother and her Child

Amid the constant crackle of radios and chatter of inmates, surprising sounds linger in the prison halls.

A baby's coo. A mother's gentle soothing. The creak of a rocking chair, rhymes recited from a children's book, scratches of a crayon.

Behind the barbed wire fence at Alouette Correctional Centre for Women, 50 kilometres east of Vancouver, is a state of the art nursery. It's one of the only mother-child units in a Canadian prison system that leaves many children without mothers.

In fact, Alouette is the only mother-child unit in a provincial-level institution, where 6,000 women serve time in 18 facilities across the country (there are others in federal prisons, but the vast majority of women are sentenced provincially). Experts estimate 20,000 Canadian children are separated from their mothers because of incarceration every year.

"We judge these women. We say, you're a bad woman, you must be a bad mother, so we punish the child as well," says Dr. Ruth Elwood Martin, director of the Collaborating Centre for Prison Health and Education at the University of British Columbia and a former prison physician.

Children behind bars may sound like fodder for a juicy story or a bad comedy. But over 90 countries around the world – including Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany – have laws allowing prison child care in some form. Eligible women undergo rigorous screening to ensure their children aren't at risk, and the programs have proven benefits.

At Alouette, inmate mothers raise their children under supervision, receive parenting and first aid classes, as well as babysitting support. At age four, children transition to living there part time as they begin school.

Medical studies show that keeping newborns with their incarcerated mothers is the best thing for the baby's health. Time together leads to improved social and emotional growth, limits anxiety and depression, and boosts immune system development.

It's also good for the mother's well-being and rehabilitation. Time with their children is incentive for women to turn their lives around and leads to lower recidivism rates.

Bonding time can also heal societal trauma and familial wounds, says Martin, but for most inmate mothers without access to facilities, that opportunity is lost.

Critics say prisons are the new residential schools, contributing to the breakup of indigenous families as the number of indigenous women in Canadian prisons has grown over 100 per cent since 2001.

Healing family ties is a major part of reconciliation, and prisons offer a unique opportunity to address some of the residual trauma by supporting family bonds.

"We're dealing with tragically high numbers of indigenous women, many who experienced trauma or substance abuse themselves," says Martin. "We have an opportunity to break that cycle."

For two decades, Martin has been advocating for mothers and babies behind bars, calling for mother-child units in all Canadian correctional facilities.

We're echoing her call. Our prison system is meant for rehabilitation, not punishing Canada's most vulnerable families.

The damaging effects of separation can be permanent, Martin says. "Once you take a baby away from its mother, there's no going back."

Craig and Marc Kielburger
HuffPost
May 15, 2017

PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY

☞ In Remembrance ☜

- August 10 -

There are more than 200 Unnatural
Prisoner Deaths in Canada.

- Each and Every Year -

We maintain a PJD 'In Remembrance' page on our website for Prisoners who have died in Federal and Provincial Prisons, Remands, Lock-ups and Parole in Canada.

If you wish to have someone remembered there, send us a note or email and we will honour your request.

PJD@PrisonFreePress.org

Fewer prisoners on parole isn't making us safer

We are wasting money on prisons in Canada. Not that we should remove them, but they are certainly being overused.

Prior to the mid-1990s it was widely accepted that imprisonment is a necessary evil that should be used sparingly. Today, imprisonment is viewed as the number one way to deal with criminals. Any methods other than imprisonment are typically considered "too lenient." What has changed?

In recent years, we have been told that a "tough-on-crime" approach is the only way to deal with crime effectively, and that prisons can keep our streets safe because they keep criminals off them. However, this so called "safety" is temporary.

In 2013-14, of all the guilty findings that resulted in a prison sentence only 3.4 per cent of them were sentenced to a federal prison (a sentence longer than two years). The remaining 96.6 per cent have received sentences shorter than two years, with most getting sentences of six months or less (87.7 per cent). Further, of the inmates in federal prisons in 2014-15, 50.4 per cent were serving sentences shorter than five years and 70 per cent shorter than 10 years. Most prisoners will be released at some point, many of who will be released in a relatively short period of time.

Ideally, criminals will serve their sentences, be released from prison and live a productive, crime-free life. Unfortunately, this is not always the way it works. There is no evidence to show that prisons have a rehabilitative effect (in fact, there is some evidence that suggests the opposite), and the transition from prison back into society is not an easy one.

This is the role of parole - or at least its original role. After serving one-third of their sentence, a prisoner becomes eligible for parole (released from prison with a list of conditions that must be followed for the remainder of their sentence). The purpose is to facilitate the peaceful reintegration of prisoners back into society. When it works, it is a win-win scenario for both the prisoner and the community.

However, parole is on the decline. Fifty years ago, around 1 out of 5.4 federal prisoners were released on parole and 1 out of 3.6 provincial prisoners. Comparatively, in 2012-13, 1 out of

14.7 federal prisoners were released on parole, and 1 out of 35.9 provincial prisoners. Further, it is uncommon for those who are released on parole to actually be released at the one-third mark. Rather, on average, parolees are released at the 46 per cent mark of their sentence. The parole system is merely a shell of what it once was.

What is happening? The purpose of parole has shifted from the gradual reintegration of prisoners into society to a merit based system that "rewards" those who are judged to pose no risk to society. This is in complete contrast to the original purpose of parole.

Today, those who (in theory) need the most time and help to reintegrate back into society are given the least amount of time and help to do so. Parole boards are not allowed to grant parole to anyone who they think might reoffend. It is said that this enhances public safety. Given that many of the prisoners who are "too dangerous" to be granted parole will eventually be released, it can be argued that this actually reduces public safety.

It is understandable why parole boards would be hesitant to release prisoners. They are held accountable for any parolee who reoffends while on parole. When considering public safety, it may be better to release some prisoners too early, than release a lot of prisoners too late.

It was mentioned earlier that we are wasting money on prisons. Here is why. On average, it costs \$115,310 per year to keep an offender in a federal prison. Conversely, it would cost only \$34,432 to maintain that same offender in the community. The misuse of parole is both a public safety and economic issue.

The argument here is not that all prisoners should automatically be granted parole. Rather, parole needs to be used more, scrutinized less, and used for the right reasons. The current parole system is a waste of tax dollars, and if it remains in its current state we are better off abolishing parole altogether. Without the appropriate use of parole, imprisonment serves the sole purpose of punishment, without any consideration for rehabilitation and prevention.

Nathaniel Schutten
Toronto Star - Opinion
Apr 17, 2017

A Helping Hand

So here I am again
 Nothing changed, still the same
 An empty cold cell, all alone
 My built up tears bleed my pain
 From time to time, down this face of stone
 My life's fucked, it's a joke, a game
 Where's my haven? Where's my home?
 My hands are covered in red
 From all the love we bled
 I just need some warmth, I need a heart
 I need some worth to go back to the start
 My eyes are tired from trauma & hurt
 Please pull me up from this dirt
 Save me from my inevitable fate
 Please pull me up before it's too late

- Sarah Jane Posthumus

The Cage

Staring longingly out of the window
 As daylight swings from powder to deep dusk
 Another night closes in ...

As visions of freedom and escape fade
 Like images within a dream or half-dream
 Somewhere just beyond reach ...

Feeling the despair of a bird bruising its wings
 Fitfully against a case of circumstance
 Happiness seems forever elusive ...

Like floating on a sea of desire
 For which one can see no shore
 Hours wash by in waves of loneliness ...

Yet I will not regret these hours
 Each one being its own lesson
 In patience and solitude

For eventually the cage will be opened
 On a new freedom more sacred
 Having paid for it with time

- Randy Blackburn

O Fool I Am

O fool I am
 O fool I'll be
 But I'll not let
 The cruel world see me
 For I shall hide
 The way I feel
 Just as an orange
 By its peel

- Helenann Young

Hardened Heart

His heart has been damaged
 Betrayal and dishonesty were the weapons
 As his heart heals
 Hidden behind an iron door
 Trust is locked away

- Steve Bartkowski

Untitled

Stopping staring
 Lost in space
 Thoughts mismatched
 Out of place

Contemplating
 My mood today
 Feeling so hollow
 Filled with rage

How to capture joy
 Contentment, glee
 Something besides monotony
 And fucking misery

So here I stare
 Still lost in space
 Thoughts mismatched
 So out of place

- Anonymous

Take a Moment

*I can't handle this pounding behind my eyes
 And today I can't handle the bullshit and lies
 So ladies please think before starting anything
 We all know the trouble it can bring
 Just stay out of my space I don't wanna play
 I'm wound up tight so just simply stay away
 Today is not the day to act the clown
 Just don't act up and you won't go down*

- Tammy Chrzaszcz

Going Nowhere

*Locked up
 But not locked out of society
 Just detained momentarily
 Being kept from my dreams
 These steel bars that confine me
 Without them realizing it
 One day they will release me
 I first came here not knowing what to expect
 I know now that it is another system
 Where there is no form of respect*

*We walk miles around
 In one big circle
 On a ten inch concrete slab
 Imbedded into the ground
 We see the sunlight shine
 Through the wire meshed cage
 Which from deep inside
 Holds much anger and rage
 We are sent here to do time
 Society calls it 'Rehabilitation'*

- William Joncas Jr

The reward for conformity is everyone likes you but yourself.

- Rita Mae Brown

Adulthood was invented to repair the wounds of childhood.

- Joy Browne

Behind the Great Wall

*When night lights are glowing
 As the evening comes down
 With my cigarette glowing
 As the old heartache comes 'round
 My problems are many
 My chances are small
 Because I got no freedom
 Behind the great wall
 My memories of loved ones returns
 Every night as I lose track of justice
 And wrong and what's right
 Because the life of a prisoner
 Ain't no life at all
 Just because my problems are many
 My chances are small
 I got no freedom
 Behind the Great Wall*

- Timothy Covington

There's No Way

*Today has been a disappointing day
 They're trying to hurt me in any way
 They can't get to me
 I just won't let it be
 So it sucks to be them, it can't be done
 I'm the one who won, I'm still number one
 I'm happy to say
 I'm glad it happened this way
 I feel so good inside today
 Nothing can bring me down in any way
 My life is changing for the better
 I actually got it together
 I'm so proud of myself
 There's nothing I don't doubt
 It's a great day to be alive
 There's nothing that I haven't tried
 So when you see me on the street
 You'll know I have a different kind of beat
 Living life the right way
 And looking forward to every new day!*

- Kathy Polchies-Roberts

Edmonton Institution runs on 'culture of fear' and intimidation, report finds

Edmonton's maximum-security prison is operating on a dystopian system of fear, harassment and bullying - where a handful of employees have seized control and abuse their power to stay on top, according to an internal report obtained by CBC News.

Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) ordered the report around the time it came to light that some male guards missed some inmates' calls for help while they had sexually explicit conversations about their female coworkers, using work phones.

The report describes a toxic culture at the Edmonton Institution, where bad behaviour is on full display but often goes undisciplined, and employees are afraid to tell managers about infractions, like abuse of co-workers or inmates, for fear of retribution.

The toxicity in the Edmonton prison was so prolific that the investigators compared it to the "the Blob," from the 1950s sci-fi movie of the same name.

"Many of the people who become part of it are good people but helpless against its power," reads the report. "How do you get rid of something so all-consuming?"

'Truly broken'

Last fall, the CSC's deputy commissioner Peter Linkletter tasked an independent consulting firm with looking into the Edmonton Institution's working environment.

The firm picked 83 current and past employees at random to answer a set of questions during hour-long interviews. The firm also interviewed 23 others, including experts, union representatives and senior managers.

Employees reported harassment, bullying and intimidation at most levels, the report said, from management down.

They also referred to five or six people in particular who used bullying and intimidation tactics to wield power. While those people are not named in the report, it suggests employees knew who they were and feared them.

"Some felt guilty that they had turned away from watching actions that others did that were wrong — abuse of other staff or inmates. Why? In part, because they feared retribution from bullies," the report reads.

The report's summary goes on to describe how people who raise concerns at the prison are reportedly bullied, gossiped about or left without backup while on the range with prisoners.

The employees said they interpret these actions as threats to their careers and personal safety.

"There was a strong sense among interviewees that EI is truly broken. It can only be described as a culture of fear, mistrust, intimidation, disorganization and inconsistency," the report said.

There were also allegations that employees used lockdowns, searches and safety complaints to "rile up inmates, to shirk their responsibilities, or to get back at management."

The report notes that the Edmonton Institution has seen a spike in searches since 2015.

The document - dated March 12, 2017 - offers 40 recommendations for change.

They include sending new employees elsewhere for training during the first six weeks of employment, putting the six kingpin employees on notice, and designating a "respected person" to take on harassment complaints for at least three years.

Sexual harassment underreported

CBC has spoken with four correctional employees who have direct knowledge of the conditions in the prison. They are not being named due to concern for their safety and their jobs.

Their accounts not only corroborate the report's contents, but they say in some cases, the issues described are worse in reality.

Sexual harassment, for example, is mentioned in two short paragraphs that open with "our observations of the interactions between men and woman at EI were generally collegial and respected [sic] ... There are still staff who have not overcome the view of women as sexual objects, rather than equal colleagues."

Sexual harassment amongst staff at the prison is rampant, the sources say, and can begin from day one. Male trainers have been known to suggest that female recruits must offer them sexual favours in order to "pass" their training, they say.

"There needs to be an independent second party for people's grievances and complaints. They need someone who feels safe to go to, to initiate the investigation, and to protect these people," one source said.

"I don't see how anything can change without a management change and specialized corporate people involved."

The CSC turned down multiple requests for an interview. But spokesperson Jeff Campbell wrote in an email that the organization supports the recommendations and has struck a committee to address them.

"We do not tolerate any breach of our policies and all allegations are thoroughly investigated regardless of the source," he said in a statement.

'It's like Lord of the Flies'

Canada's correctional investigator Ivan Zinger said his office has recently received so many human rights abuse allegations from the Edmonton Institution that his team wrote to the CSC commissioner directly to ask for an independent report on the workplace.

It was only the second time in his office's history that they have asked for action on a labour issue.

"It is shocking. There's no doubt some strong intervention is required," Zinger said.

Glenn French, president of the Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, said the report shows there's been "a failure in leadership" at the Edmonton Institution.

"I was appalled, frankly," French said. "It's like Lord of the Flies."

He said he was particularly struck by the mentions of harassment or assault against inmates, and by the fact that the toxicity was reported to have saturated all levels.

"Something quite dramatic needs to happen, in my view."

Marion Warnica
CBC News
Jun 22, 2017

Canada 150 is a celebration of Indigenous genocide.

The majority of Canadians don't have all the facts about that, while First Nations continue to live the crisis-level effects of that legacy.

Perhaps Canada should cancel its celebrations and undertake the hard work necessary to make amends.

- Pamela Palmater



End Immigrant Detention Network

We are an organization of volunteers working towards justice for those incarcerated. Many of us are women and trans people of colour. Our main focus has been on immigration detainees. However, we want build relationships with ALL inmates.

We run two phone lines in Ontario:

- If you are in a facility with a 705 area code, call us collect at 705-340-4432 on Wed, Thurs, Fri, or Sun from 2-4.
- If you are in a facility with a 905 or 416 area code, call us collect at 416-775-0242 any day.
- If we do not pick up the first time, keep trying - sometimes we can't answer.

Not in Ontario? Need a listener or pen pal? Write us here:

The Centre for Women & Trans People
U of T, North Borden Bldg
563 Spadina Ave, Room 100
Toronto, ON, M5S 2J7



High cost of making calls from Nova Scotia jails is 'predatory'

Inmate advocates say the high cost of phone calls at Nova Scotia's provincial jails is isolating those behind bars from their families and hindering their chances of rehabilitation.

"We're incarcerating people and then the phone system is adding this extra punishment," said Ashley Avery, women and youth services coordinator with Coverdale Courtwork Services, a Halifax non-profit that provides support to female inmates.

"To take someone's liberties away and then further punish them ... I think is predatory and oppressive in and of itself."

Since 2013, Nova Scotia has contracted phone systems in its provincial jails to the Texas-based company Synergy Inmate Phones, which also operates jail phone systems in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

Documents obtained by CBC News through a freedom of information request show the user-pay system charged more than \$580,000 for calls made at Nova Scotia's four adult correctional facilities in 2015.

'It aggravates the situation'

Phone calls at Nova Scotia jails cost between \$1.50-1.85 per 20-minute collect call or \$1-1.35 per 20-minute prepaid call, plus 30 cents a minute on long-distance calls. There are also taxes and fees for collect calls.

Taxes and fees are also levied on money deposited into an inmate's telephone account, which can be used for prepaid calls. If a relative uses a credit card to deposit \$60 into an inmate's account, they can expect to pay an additional \$14 in fees and taxes.

Avery said the cost of calls makes it harder for inmates to find support such as housing or financial help following release from jail.

"The women that are in [jail] are our most economically marginalized women, so they already struggle in the community to begin with," she said.

"Then they are put in the institution and they are cut off from the very few supports they already have ... so it aggravates the situation even further."

'A great financial cost'

In early April, inmates at Northeast Nova Scotia Correctional Facility in Pictou County started a

petition calling on the provincial justice department to end "exploitative" phone costs.

While some families find ways to cover costs, Avery said that's not an option for most. For the few she's spoken to who can afford to connect, phone costs average \$700 a month. She said those families often have to cut out essential items from their budget to keep in touch with their loved one who is incarcerated.

'\$9,000, if not more'

For other families, costs can far exceed \$700 a month. In 2014, Tonya Paris' son was held for nine months on remand. He often called two or three times a day - and it wasn't long before the family was racking up huge bills.

"[We] all wanted contact with him because we were all worried, and the only way we could contact him is if we paid money. So he was in there for nine months, and honest to God, I think we probably paid about \$9,000, if not more."

Paris's son wasn't in Nova Scotia - he was being held in a facility in Alberta, which also contracts its phone systems to Synergy Inmate Phones. But Paris said her family has encountered similar bills with a brother who's been in and out of Nova Scotia facilities, and for whom the phone was a lifeline.

Some proceeds go to offender trust fund

Most of the money charged for phone calls is collected by the company that runs the service, Synergy Inmate Phones, but the province takes a commission which goes into an offender trust fund.

In 2015, a little more than \$100,000 went into the trust fund, which must be used for inmates' benefit.

Services paid for from the trust fund can include televisions in common areas as well as educational programs, library books and the offender incentive, which is an allowance provided to inmates for work performed at a facility.

Working a minimum of three days a week, an inmate can earn up to \$10 bi-weekly through the incentive. One 20-minute long-distance call costs \$7.

Charging for expenses

Canadian senator Kim Pate is the former executive director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies. She says that by funding inmates' recreational and educational services partially through money generated by the phone

system, the province places the burden of paying for important programming on the inmates themselves.

"We're supposed to be long since past debtors prisons in this country, and [this system] basically amounts to charging the prisoners for the expenses of them being in the jail, and having basic needs met or basic entitlements met in a way that they have to pay for."

Rehabilitation important

Synergy Canada president Charles Slaughter said in an email to CBC News that because of contractual restraints, he could not discuss details of provincial accounts.

Nova Scotia's Department of Justice said in a statement it's important that inmates maintain connection with loved ones, which is facilitated through phone and in-person visits. The department also said the increased security features of jail phone systems - such as blocking numbers, or recording and monitoring calls - make them unlike residential phone service.

The province said rehabilitation for inmates is a priority, and that programming is offered to help with that process.

Jeopardizing reintegration

But Pate believes the high cost of phones in jail is jeopardizing inmates' connection to their families, which research shows is the most important factor in reducing the chances of inmates re-offending.

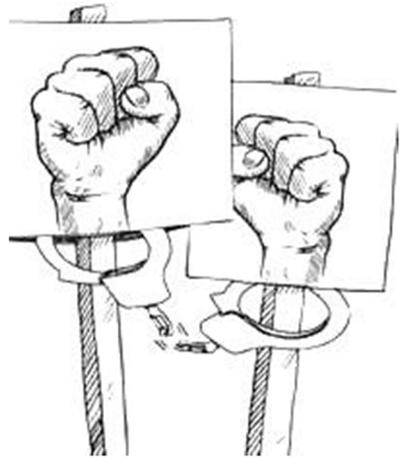
"Provincial and territorial and federal corrections have long maintained that one of the best indicators of whether someone will do well and integrate into the community is the extent to which they are able to maintain ties with their families," Pate said.

She said that if inmates can't speak with relatives, then the corrections system is interfering with one of their own objectives — to help move people through the system and into the community.

Moira Donovan
CBC News
Apr 18, 2017

If you are selling security, you have to make sure people feel insecure.

- Spun



My silences have not protected me.
Your silence will not protect you.

- Audre Lorde

Those who do not move,
do not notice their chains.

- Rosa Luxemburg

Penpal Program for Gay, Queer, Trans Prisoners

The Prisoner Correspondence Project runs a penpal program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer prisoners in Canada, pairing them up with gay and queer and trans people outside of prison for friendship and support. We also coordinate a resource library of information and resources related to health, sexuality, and prisons - get in touch with us for a list of resources we have, or for details.

If you want to be paired up with a penpal, please send a short description of yourself & interests to:

Prisoner Correspondence Project
c/o QPIRG Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal, QC, H3G 1M8

Please indicate French or in English.
Veuillez svp nous indiquer anglais ou en français.

Important Hep C Update!

New treatments with excellent success rates are now available!

These are in pill form and have little or no side effects. The downside is the cost of course: \$1000+ per pill.

Harvoni: \$60,000 - 8 weeks (Genotype 1, low viral load, never-treated)

Harvoni: \$90,000 - 12 weeks (Genotype 1)

Sovaldi: \$55,000++ perhaps with other drugs for Genotypes other than Genotype 1

Federal Prisons: *you may be able to start your treatment while inside.*

Provincial Prisons: *Depending on the province, you may have to wait till you get out.*

- When released, get right on welfare or disability.
- Federal health care programs like NIHB & IFH may cover costs.
- Go to a Clinic and get your blood work done so you can get into a Treatment Program at no cost to you.

Important: most prisons, provincial drug plans, and private plans restrict the new drugs to people who have chronic hep C plus scarring of the liver (stage F2 or higher fibrosis). Both never-treated & people for whom Peg-Interferon & Ribavirin did not work are eligible for the newer treatments. For people with hep C and no liver scarring or light scarring (less than F2 fibrosis), it's still Peg-Interferon & Ribavirin. Get your liver tested! New tests have replaced biopsies: Fibre-test (blood) & Fibro-test (imaging).

HEP C = 18-30% in prison

HIV = 1-5% in prison

Do Not Share or Re-Use:
needles, ink, ink holders, rigs, ...
... well, anything in contact
with blood !!!

BLEACH DOES NOT KILL HEP C

Facts about HIV and HCV

With some exceptions, HIV and HCV infection is generally more prevalent among women than men in prison, particularly among those who have a history of injection drug use.

In a study of provincial prisons in Quebec, the HIV and HCV rate among incarcerated women was, respectively, 8.8 and 29.2 percent, compared to 2.4 and 16.6 percent among male prisoners.

In a study of female prisoners in British Columbia (B.C.), self-reported rates of HIV and HCV were 8 percent and 52 percent, respectively.

In a 2007 nationwide survey by CSC, the HIV and HCV rate among federally incarcerated women was 5.5 and 30.3 percent, compared to 4.5 and 30.8 percent among federally incarcerated men. Aboriginal women reported the highest rates of HIV and HCV, at 11.7 and 49.1 percent, respectively.

While the majority of women in prison are voluntarily tested for both HIV and HCV, the provision of pre- and post-test counselling has been reported to be poor, and in some cases, non-existent.

Women in prison are more likely than women in the general population to have faced violence and abuse; therefore, counselling accompanying HIV diagnosis is particularly important. Women in prison have concerns about the privacy and confidentiality of their HIV status.

Women have reported being forced to draw unwanted attention. Women (37.0%) reported being HCV-positive. Aboriginal women were identified as a particularly high-risk group because they reported the highest rates of HIV (11.7%) and HCV infections (49.1%).

These data highlight the need to ensure that culturally appropriate, effective interventions that decrease risk-behaviours and increase utilization of harm-reduction measures are offered to meet the needs of Aboriginal women.

A Child of an Incarcerated Parent

The Reality

- Every year over 150,000 adults are remanded into custody which results in approximately 180,000 innocent children who suffer from the traumatic effect of parental incarceration in Canada
- Over 5000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA
- The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increases with the passing of the Crime Bill C-10

The Need

- Despite the growing prevalence of these innocent victims the resources available are minimal
- The cost and lack of accessibility to correctional facilities restrict child-parent visits. Consequently, some children can never visit their incarcerated parents

The Impact

- Children of incarcerated parents grieve the loss of their parent
- These children are four times more likely to be in conflict with the law
- Social stigma of incarceration causes some families to avoid discussing the absence of a parent

Research suggests that parental incarceration has a detrimental impact on children. These innocent children suffer the traumatic experience of being separated from their parent. Following parental imprisonment, children are faced with a myriad of challenges including:

- feelings of shame, grief, guilt, abandonment, anger
- lowered self-esteem
- economic instability
- social stigma and isolation
- disconnection from parent
- insecurity in familial and peer relationships
- school absenteeism, poor school performance
- difficulty in coping with future stress/ trauma
- compromised trust in others including law enforcement



F.E.A.T. - Family Visitation

F.E.A.T. for Children of Incarcerated Parents was founded in 2011 to support the needs of the over 15,000 children in the Greater Toronto Area that have a parent in the criminal justice system.

F.E.A.T.'s Family Visitation Program provides weekend transportation from Toronto to correctional facilities in Southern Ontario for children and families to visit imprisoned loved ones.

During our trips, F.E.A.T provides free snacks and refreshments, offers a variety of games and activities, and plays movies.

Our bus is a place where youth and families have a chance to talk about their experiences of having a loved one inside and receive support from mentors and other riders.

Our Family Visitation Program is free for anyone 18 years old and younger. If you are interested in participating in our program, please call or email F.E.A.T. to register today.

For more information or to book a seat on the bus please contact Jessica or Derek Reid by email at info@featforchildren.org or by phone at 416-505-5333.



PRISON RADIO

- Guelph - CFRU 93.3 FM
Prison Radio - Thurs 10-11 am
Call-in 519-837-2378
- Halifax - CKDU 88.1 FM
Black Power Hour - Fri 1:30-3 pm
Youth Now! - Mon 5-6:30 pm
- Kingston - CFRC 101.9 FM
CPR: Prison Radio - Wed 7-8 pm
- Montreal - CKUT 90.3 FM
PRS - 2nd Thurs 5-6 pm & 4th Fri 11-noon
- Vancouver - CFRO 100.5 FM
Stark Raven - 1st Mon 7-8 pm

CPR: This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio & Vancouver Co-op Radio's Stark Raven programs.

The last Wednesday of each month, CPR features 'Calls From Home', sharing letters, emails, voice messages and music requests by and for prisoners and their loved ones.

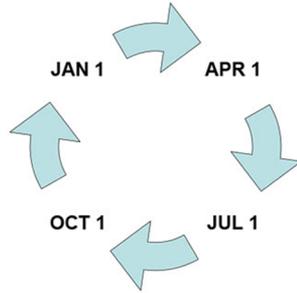
Prisoners and their loved ones are invited to contribute music requests, messages and suggestions for the program.

*Write: CPR c/o CFRC, Lwr Carruthers Hall,
Queen's University,
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6*

*Email: CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net
Call: 613-329-2693 to record a message or
music request to be broadcast on-air.*

Prisoners Justice Day is August 10

- CLASS ACTION! NEWS -



- MAILOUT DATES -

Issue #6 - Summer 2017

Class Action News
PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

download, print, contact:
www.ClassActionNews.org

Next Issue: #7 - Fall 2017
Deadline: Sep 1, 2017
Mail-out: Oct 1, 2017

If you don't like the news ...

... make some of your own !!!

Whatcha got in there that needs to get out ?

... Hmm ...?

Art, Poems, Stories, News, Whatever !



POB39P M5S2S6