

Women's Prison Network



Issue #29 Winter 2022/23

< Editor's Note >

Welcome to Issue #29 of Women's Prison Network, a magazine by & for women, trans & youth prisoners in 'Settler Canada'.



In every Issue we strive to provide a safe space for creative expression, informative news & support resources. These zines feature art, poetry, stories, news, observations, concerns, & anything of sincere value to share. Health & Harm Reduction info will always be provided, of course - Yes, Do 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 = 300 words max). For author protection, letters & story credits will all be 'Anonymous' unless requested.

'Women's Prison Network' is published 4 times per year. It is sent out for free to Women, Trans & Youth in Prisons in Canada. If you are on the outside or part of an organization, please consider a donation!!!

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Cover: Mary Tremonte
Pg 7: Olga Talamante + Guerrilla Girls



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You!

Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

- The right of life, liberty and security of person (Section 7).
- The right not to be arbitrarily detained (Section 9).
- The right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment (Section 12).
- The right to be equal before and under the law (Section 15).

< Ancestral Territorial Acknowledgment >

We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which Prison Free Press operates is the Traditional Territory of the Wendat, the Anishnaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

~ 'Dish With One Spoon' Wampum ~

We can't change prisons without changing society, we know that this is a long and dangerous struggle. But the more who are involved in it, the less dangerous, and the more possible it will be. - Claire Culhane

Judges should be free to impose conditional sentences when reasonable

If you're willing to shell out more than four hundred bucks, you can find yourself a pretty nice hotel room for the evening. Or you can go to jail, since that's how much it cost, in 2020-21, to house one inmate in a federal prison for one day. According to Statistics Canada, that amounts to about \$150,000 per year. The exorbitant price of prison is just one reason why the federal government has proposed alternatives to jailing offenders who don't represent a danger to the public.

One such alternative, implemented in 1996, allows offenders to serve their sentences in the community instead of jail. Community supervision costs far less than custody, with a savings in the range of \$100,000 per year for every offender who receives a "conditional" sentence.

In addition, offenders serving conditional sentences can maintain their education or employment, and can therefore support themselves and their families while also paying taxes.

Although conditional sentences are often perceived as being soft on crime, offenders are subject to community supervision and must abide by strict conditions, the violation of which can result in their being sent to jail. And offenders must serve their entire sentences, since there's no parole when you haven't been incarcerated.

Conditional sentences therefore offer an effective and cost-effective alternative to the prohibitively expensive practice of imprisonment. It's too bad, then, that the number of such sentences has declined rapidly throughout the last two decades. While courts issued more than 11,000 conditional sentences in 2004-05, fewer than 7,000 were imposed in 2019-20.

One of the main reasons for this decline is the successive restrictions placed on the availability of such sentences. In an effort to appear tough on crime, the government of Stephen Harper passed legislation, in 2007 and again in 2012, limiting the offences for which a person can receive a conditional sentence.

Those restrictions were the subject of a Charter challenge by 20-year-old Cheyenne Sharma, who was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for importing nearly two kilograms of cocaine. At the

time of the offence, Sharma needed money to support her young daughter and to avoid eviction. The Ontario Court of Appeal described her as a "prime candidate" for a conditional sentence. But she was nonetheless imprisoned because the Harper amendments precluded her from serving her time in the community.

This is the problem with imposing unnecessary limitations on the availability of conditional sentences: such restrictions limit judges' discretion to fashion sentences that are appropriate, given the unique circumstances of the offence and the offender.

Certainly, some drug dealers deserve to be imprisoned. But for others like Sharma, imprisonment only causes further hardship for both offenders and their dependants, and wastes valuable public funds. The Supreme Court of Canada nevertheless rejected Sharma's appeal earlier this month, which means the ball is now in Parliament's court.

Ottawa has shown interest in increasing judicial discretion and reducing unnecessary incarceration, most notably through the introduction of Bill C-5, which eliminates mandatory penalties for a variety of offences.

However, the government's defence of the Harper restrictions - and its willingness to take the matter to the Supreme Court - seems at odds with its support of Bill C-5.

By way of explanation, the office of the Attorney General said the Crown appealed the Sharma decision because it "engages an important issue regarding the bounds of parliamentary authority to enact and amend the criminal law without offending the Charter."

That may be. But the government also urged senators to pass Bill C-5 to give "judges the discretion they need to have a punishment fit the crime." Now it needs to redouble its own commitment to judicial discretion by ensuring that judges are free to impose conditional sentences wherever it's reasonable to do so.

Star Editorial Board
Nov 17, 2022

Prisons do not disappear problems,
they disappear human beings.
- Angela Davis

Female inmate in Saskatchewan approaching 8th week of hunger strike

Faith Eagle, a woman on remand in Prince Albert, Sask., has been on a hunger strike for nearly eight weeks, says the advocacy group Beyond Prison Walls.

Eagle has refused meals and consumed nothing but liquids in her cell at Pine Grove Correctional Centre since Sept. 19.

Sherri Maier, who speaks for Beyond Prison Walls Canada, says Eagle initially refused to eat because of what she said was poor first aid treatment provided to inmates, bad food and foul-smelling water.

Maier said Eagle, a Native American who is living in Saskatoon, also wants to draw attention to the death by suicide of First Nations woman Lynette Kakakaway, 33, in her cell on June 24.

In a news release the same day, Saskatchewan's Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety said employees "called EMS (Emergency Medical Services) who initiated life-saving measures, but the inmate was declared dead."

The ministry is also conducting an internal investigation, the release added.

Beyond Prison Walls Canada, which Maier launched in 2017, advocates for inmates and their families.

Eagle, who is Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate from South Dakota and was working in Saskatoon, is also refusing food over what Maier described as "racist" treatment by guards

"Their mandates are to provide rehabilitation, and I always (use) the term it's a correctional centre, so let's correct their behaviour," she said.

Maier said other inmates at Pine Grove had on Friday already joined Eagle in refusing to eat, and more were expected to follow suit at midnight Friday.

Inmates at the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre and Saskatchewan Penitentiary in Prince Albert are also expected to stage strikes over the weekend, Maier added, noting inmates in Edmonton might join as well.

The Ministry of Corrections told APTN it knew about the growing hunger strike.

"The Ministry is aware that three inmates at the Pine Grove Correctional Centre are participating in a tray refusal," it said in an emailed statement. "The participating inmates are accepting liquids such as water, coffee, juice, Gatorade and Boost.

"The Ministry is monitoring the situation and working to ensure the health and safety of the participating inmates. Inmates participating in tray refusals receive continued medical supervision, including regular doctor check-ups."

Maier said Eagle went to the hospital to be treated for dehydration earlier this week, and is still committed to protesting inmates' living conditions and calling for the resignation of senior staff and a place for Indigenous inmates to hold traditional ceremonies.

Maier said Eagle, who has been on remand awaiting trial for five months, once worked for Str8 UP (STRAIGHT UP) in Saskatoon, an agency that helps offenders turn their lives around.

Maier said she did not know why Eagle was on remand.

A representative of the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) visited Eagle this week, Maier added, and Vice Chief David Pratt of the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations also called her.

STC Tribal Chief Mark Arcand said some of the issues Eagle is raising are solvable.

*He said STC recently signed an agreement with the provincial government to design and deliver an Indigenous-led program to help newly released female inmates transition back into their communities. *Īkwēskīcik iskwēwak*, which means "turning their life around" in Cree, provides up to 18 months of intensive support to female offenders who are reincarcerated on minor offences, he said.*

Arcand agreed that a space for ceremonies was needed.

"This is one of the things we've been working on," he added in an interview. "...They have this in the federal penitentiary in Prince Albert. Because we have to remember, a lot of First Nations people, Indigenous people, have lost their culture due to residential schools.

"If this means they can find it through their system they are incarcerated in, that's a bonus. I think at the end of the day it has to be a must, and we have to have that investment. This is how we have to change the system."

Hiring more Indigenous guards would be a longer-term goal, Arcand said.

"Whether you're Indigenous or non-Indigenous, (you) still have to follow rules inside of those facilities as correctional officers," he noted. "I don't know how quick the turnaround time would

be to hire Indigenous people, but I think that's a reasonable request.

Leanne Sanders
 APTN National News - Nov 04, 2022

Tackle social issues that lead to incarceration

A Saskatchewan advocate says more support is needed to prevent people from ending up in prison, in the wake of a new report that says Canada has made very little progress in addressing the over-representation of Black and Indigenous people behind bars.

"I think we really do need to see some fundamental shifts in our justice system," said Shawn Fraser, CEO of the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan.

The report from Ivan Zinger, the country's top prison watchdog, says some inmates are facing even worse conditions than they did a decade ago and that systemic concerns and barriers, including rampant racial discrimination, stereotyping and bias, are just "as pervasive and persistent as before."

"For an organization that spends so much money to have poor correctional outcomes, especially for Indigenous prisoners as well as for Black prisoners, is a real shame and something that Canadians should be concerned with."

Indigenous people are more likely to be subjected to force by correctional officers, put into structured intervention, placed in maximum security and labelled as gang members, according to Zinger.

Additionally, Indigenous prisoners are more likely to self-injure and attempt suicide. Five out of six prisoners who died by suicide last year were Indigenous, Zinger said.

While Fraser finds the report disheartening, it doesn't surprise him.

"I don't think the system has really changed much in the last many years," in an interview.

The report found that Black prisoners represent 9.2% of the total incarcerated population despite representing only about 3.5% of the overall Canadian population.

Meanwhile, the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in prison continues to worsen. They only represent about 5% of the Canadian population, but now make up 32% of the prison population. In Saskatchewan, Indigenous overrepresentation

is much more dramatic.

As of Thursday, 80% of people in province-run jails were Indigenous, according to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. The ministry said that was a one-day snapshot and that the percentage of inmates who are Indigenous ranges from 75 to 80%.

"Certainly this legacy of colonialism is right on the surface of Saskatchewan," Fraser said.

He said it's important to keep in mind that crime is a symptom of a broader illness: poverty.

"If we want to look at what's driving these numbers, it's really about poverty. And we need to understand that keeping people in prison is very expensive," he said.

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) employs about 1.2 staff members for each incarcerated person and spends almost \$190,000 a year per prisoner, according to Zinger, putting it among the best-financed agencies in the world.

Fraser said more money needs to be spent on things like housing, education and family supports to try to prevent people from going to prison.

"I think people really do need to understand that by the time somebody goes to prison, it's already too late," he said.

Mark Arcand, tribal chief of the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC), said it's also important to support people after they're released to prevent them from reoffending.

"We're trying to rehabilitate people. So if people don't have a home to go back to, how do we get them home? If they need education, how do we get them into school?" Arcand said.

"We've got to have more cultural support, more one-on-ones with mental health psychiatrists, whatever they choose to do to make themselves better."

The STC is set to receive millions in funding from the Saskatchewan government to lead a pilot project that will help female offenders transition back to the community.

The organization said it will provide up to a year and a half of intensive support to female offenders who frequently return to custody for minor offences, offering them services including mental health, addictions and cultural supports.

Yasmine Ghania
 CBC News - Nov 04, 2022

'Surprising and scandalous': Take migrant detainees out of provincial jails

Two former federal cabinet ministers called on the government Monday to end the practice of incarcerating refugee claimants and migrants in provincial jails on administrative grounds.

"The facts are now out. The stories are public. Now we must decide what we're going to do about it," Allan Rock, a former justice minister and ambassador to the United Nations, told a news conference on Parliament Hill.

Rock and former foreign affairs minister Lloyd Axworthy joined Amnesty International Canada and Human Rights Watch to condemn what they alleged were arbitrary practices by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and serious human rights violations in immigration detention. In 2019-20, more than 8,800 migrants were detained in Canada, 19% of them in provincial facilities. In 2020-21, the number dropped to 1,605, with 40% held in provincial jails, as public health concerns amid the pandemic prompted the release of detainees who posed little risk to the public.

CBSA has holding centres in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec; in other provinces, migrants who have been detained can be held in provincial jails.

In a statement, CBSA said it also "relies on the use of provincial correctional facilities for the housing of immigration detainees whose risk or behaviour cannot be effectively managed" in holding centres.

Canada's immigration detention system came under fire in recent years after several detainees died in custody. Advocates are particularly concerned about the use of provincial jails to hold migrants alongside convicted prisoners - often over months and in some cases, years - on administrative grounds, pending their removals from Canada.

Across the country, more than 70 correctional facilities are used to hold federal immigration detainees whom Canada Border officials deemed a threat to the public safety or to themselves.

"It is both surprising and scandalous that an agency of the federal government treats fundamental rights with such disdain and pays no attention to the evidence," said Axworthy, who is now chair of the World Refugee & Migration Council.

In the House of Commons on Monday, NDP MP Jenny Kwan asked when the government would "put an end to this odious immigration detention practice."

"Canada has a robust and fair refugee system and immigration detention is a measure of last resort," replied Liberal MP Pam Damoff, the parliamentary secretary to Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino, who is responsible for the CBSA.

"While we've made significant progress, there's more work to do."

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International launched a joint campaign last year to lobby against the practice of holding immigration detainees in jails alongside criminals.

They are campaigning for Ontario, which holds more than half of all immigration detainees in Canada, to follow four other provinces that do not want to hold them in jails on administrative grounds.

Both former ministers said they had been made aware of such situations when they were in the government, and suggested that the current federal government should take a stronger leadership role.

"We badly need political leadership and effective oversight of the Canadian Border Services Agency so that it doesn't become a rogue agency," said Rock.

Rock said senior government officials had responded positively to his call to action, but emphasized that the CBSA was the major stumbling block.

"I believe there is a commitment in good faith on the part of the ministers to do something about this. What we're seeing, again and again, is the intransigence of the Canadian Border Services Agency. The difficulty there is in reining in the powerful organization which sometimes appears to have a mind of its own."

The news conference kicked off a "12 Days of Action" campaign by human rights groups calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to end the detention of immigrants across the country.

The call to action came after decisions by four provinces to review their immigration detention policies. In the last four months, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Alberta have asked Ottawa to cancel its immigration detention agreement with the CBSA.

Samer Muscati, the assistant disability rights director of Human Rights Watch, said urgent action is needed to prevent further violations of human rights due to the rising numbers of detainees.

"We are anxious about the increasing numbers we are seeing right now," said Muscati.

A 2021 report by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International drew attention to the thousands of migrants and asylum seekers who have suffered human rights abuses in detention.

Ketty Niyabandi, secretary general of Amnesty International Canada, said that over the past decade, thousands of immigrants - including children and refugee claimants - have been held in detention despite not facing charges or having criminal records.

Egyptian refugee Abdelrahman Elmary, who has a hearing disability, told the news conference that he was held in three different jails over two months in British Columbia without being charged or given a release date.


"I spent most of my time in jail in silence. I was only provided with one hearing-aid battery at a time, and only for CBSA meetings and hearings," said Elmary.

The report said people of colour, especially Black men, were confined in more restrictive conditions and for much longer in immigration detention.

Irem Koca
The Star
Nov 14, 2022

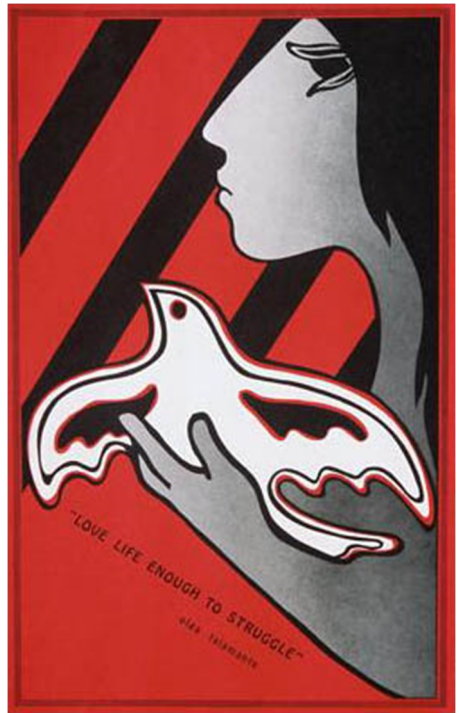


Q. What's the difference between a prisoner of war and a homeless person?



A. Under the Geneva Convention, a prisoner of war is entitled to food, shelter and medical care.

A PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGE FROM GUERRILLA GIRLS CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD



Canada failing Black, Indigenous prisoners as overrepresentation persists: Report

Canada has made scant progress in addressing the overrepresentation of Black and Indigenous people in prisons, with some facing even worse conditions than a decade ago, a new report says. The country's top prison watchdog says systemic concerns and barriers, including rampant racial discrimination, stereotyping and bias, are "as pervasive and persistent as before." Correctional Investigator Ivan Zinger said in a press conference Tuesday that he is disappointed the "extraordinarily well-financed" agency in charge of Canadian prisons has failed to recognize its role in reversing the crisis of overrepresentation.

"For an organization that spends so much money to have poor correctional outcomes, especially for Indigenous prisoners as well as for Black prisoners, is a real shame and something that Canadians should be concerned with," he said.

The Correctional Service of Canada employs about 1.2 staff members for each incarcerated person and spends almost \$109,000 a year per prisoner, Zinger said, putting it among the best-financed agencies in the world. "These are phenomenal numbers."

Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino, who oversees the service, said that he welcomed the "meticulous" report and that "extensive work" is underway to address issues.

"I look forward to working closely with CSC to ensure progress is made on the issues identified in this report to improve our federal correctional system," he said in a written statement.

"All offenders must be able to serve their sentences with dignity and without fear, in an environment that supports rehabilitation and prepares them to reintegrate into Canadian society."

Zinger's latest annual report includes an investigation of the experience of Black prisoners and the first part of an investigation focused on Indigenous people in the system. Both are updates to landmark reports in 2013, and neither found much improvement since then.

Black prisoners represent 9.2% of the total incarcerated population despite representing only about 3.5% of the overall Canadian population, the report says. More than a third of them are young Black men aged 18 to 30.

The investigation found that Black prisoners were more likely to be overrepresented at maximum-security institutions, involved in "use of force incidents," involuntarily transferred, placed in solitary confinement, institutionally charged and assessed as "higher-risk" and "lower motivation." Black prisoners relayed their experiences of "discrimination, differential treatment, stereotyping, racial bias and labelling," the report reads, and "consistently reported use of derogatory or racist language by CSC staff, as well as being ignored or disregarded in ways that increase feelings of marginalization, exclusion and isolation."

They also told investigators that they were more likely to be labelled as "gang members," or treated as such.

Zinger decried the correctional service for an "underwhelming and disappointing" response to his recommendations, and for consistently failing to include input and support from Black community groups. He said the agency promised more sensitivity training, more research projects and more policy reviews in response.

"The service's stated commitment of creating 'an anti-racist organization that is more inclusive, diverse and equitable' looks good on paper," he told reporters.

"But top-down, corporate-driven diversity, inclusion and anti-racism frameworks are not likely to reach down to root out the discriminatory and unfair treatment that Black people consistently related to us in the course of this investigation."

The over-representation of Indigenous people in prison continues to worsen, with Indigenous people now making up 32% of the prisoners, and more than 50% of incarcerated women.

Indigenous people are also more likely to be subject to the use of force by correctional officers, put into structured intervention, placed in maximum security and labelled as gang members.

Indigenous prisoners are more likely to self-injure and attempt suicide. Five out of six people who died by suicide last year were Indigenous, Zinger said.

"We found, again, terrible outcomes," he said. Though more than 30 recommendations have been made to the correctional service over the years on how to fix the problem, including funding healing lodges and allowing the

supervision of Indigenous offenders in their own communities, it "hasn't followed up very much on many of them," said Zinger.

Zinger's report includes a third investigation, this one addressing restrictive confinement in maximum security institutions for men.

It found that federal legislation intended to replace the former "administrative segregation" regime with "structured intervention units," has failed to prevent the creation and extension of segregation-like conditions.

A wide range of practices similar to solitary confinement are still used, including "voluntary limited association ranges," which are purportedly designed for "inmates who do not want to integrate in mainstream inmate populations" but who do not meet the criteria for placement in structured intervention units, the report says.

These "exist outside the law," says the report, and Zinger is calling on the correctional service to develop a national policy addressing such systems that takes into account prisoners' rights, freedoms and privileges.

Zinger's office has made 18 recommendations to the federal government overall, including eight focused on improving the lives of Black prisoners. The recommendations include the development of a national strategy that specifically addresses "the unique lived experiences and barriers faced by federally sentenced Black individuals" and a renewed call to appoint a new deputy commissioner focused exclusively on Indigenous corrections.

Among other things, Zinger is also urging the government to prohibit the use of dry cells beyond 72 hours, update the CSC's national drug strategy, change a "discriminatory" system of organizing maximum-security women and add basic safety equipment such as seatbelts to prisoner escort vehicles.

The Canadian Press
Nov 1, 2022

Love is contraband in Hell,
'cause love is an acid
that eats away bars.

- Assata Shakur

Advocates for Indigenous sisters decry Crown call for publication ban at upcoming bail hearing

The impending bail hearing for two Indigenous sisters who have spent nearly four decades in prison for a murder they maintain they did not commit has brought powerful advocates from across the county to their side.

Odelia and Nerissa Quewezance and their cousin, Jason Keshane, who was 14 at the time, were charged with second-degree murder in the death of Kamsack, SK., farmer Anthony Dolff in February 1993, and were indicted a year later. The sisters pleaded not guilty and have maintained their innocence throughout the nearly three-decade incarceration since their convictions. Keshane has confessed to Dolff's murder several times, including during the trial and to an APTN investigation, and was sentenced to two years in prison.

Success at the bail hearing would allow the sisters to leave incarceration while the federal government reviews their case for potential miscarriage of justice.

However, a Saskatchewan senior Crown prosecutor requested last week a publication ban on all evidence at the hearing.

CBC and APTN plan to oppose the publication ban. A Saskatchewan court will consider the ban this month.

Kim Pate, an Ontario senator, called the ban request "absurd" during an online news conference Monday morning called to decry the publication ban and the province's stance on the case.

"When it looks like there's a problem ... chances are there is something significantly wrong with how this case was handled," she said.

Pate says the provincial government appears to be deflecting attention and denying responsibility for the conviction of the Quewezance sisters instead of supporting Ottawa in its review.

Pate called on Saskatchewan Minister of Justice Bronwyn Eyre to support the federal application to review the sisters' convictions, support the application for bail and pull the requested publication ban.

Pate also said the federal government should prioritize the Quewezance review.

Kim Beaudin, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples vice-chief, suggested that by trying to "muzzle the

media" through the bail hearing's publication ban, the Saskatchewan government is trying to hide something.

He said the provincial government needs to step forward and do the right thing, saying he was "deeply disturbed" by the publication ban's effect on media coverage, which works to hold the government to account.

"They want to keep both Odelia and Nerissa tied up in the justice system for the rest of their natural lives," said Beaudin, a vocal advocate for the sisters.

"This is nothing more than race-based policy - race-based justice. Indigenous people in this province, and in Canada as well, know that the systems are stacked against them."

A spokesperson for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General provided a statement on behalf of public prosecutions, saying publication bans are "a standard practice for bail hearings."

"In certain situations, a publication ban and/or sealing of records may be requested to ensure fairness in the event of any future legal proceedings, such as a new trial or a hearing before the Court of Appeal," the statement said.

"The courts have recognized a critical difference between cases where the open court principle enhances public awareness of judicial proceedings, and cases where it could negatively affect any potential future proceedings."

In a statement to CBC's 'The Current' published in June, the provincial justice ministry said it is co-operating with the federal review but after further examination, "public prosecutions did not find a basis to reconsider the verdicts outside the federal review process."

Calls for an independent commission

Nicole Porter, a criminal consultant and social justice advocate who is doing a pro bono independent forensic analysis of the Quewezance case, told reporters members of the Saskatchewan government have "made it very clear that they would rather see these women locked up indefinitely than ever be released."

Allowing Odelia and Nerissa to go home would be a step toward reconciliation, she said.

Their incarceration is one argument for an independent criminal case commission, Porter says, which the federal government has committed to creating. It would consider

applications from those who believe they have been wrongfully convicted or have suffered a miscarriage of justice.

She says the commission is a step in the right direction and would allow more people to have their miscarriages heard.

"It's better than what we would have now," Porter said.

Porter started a petition to federal Justice Minister David Lametti to release the two sisters. It has climbed to more than 47,000 signatures.

'Systemic racism' for incarceration rate
Odelia and Nerissa are among the growing rate of Indigenous women in federal penitentiaries, a sign that "the systemic racism we know continues," Pate said.

She cited past statistics from the Office of the Correctional Investigator, provincial bodies and work from other organizations that show Indigenous women make up 50% of the population in federal prisons and between 75 to 95% in Saskatchewan.

"When you look at Indigenous young women alone, which of course is the ages at which both Odelia and Nerissa entered the system, the number is a horrific 98% of the youth jail population," Pate said.

"We're talking about a problem that is rife and requires immediate action."

Indigenous people make up about 75 to 80% of the population in province-run jails in Saskatchewan, according to the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

"The last time I was in one of the provincial jails in Saskatchewan you were hard pressed to find and see a non-Indigenous person," Pate said.

Dayne Patterson

CBC News

Nov 14, 2022

You've got to rattle your cage door.

You've got to let them know

that you're in there,

and that you want out.

Make noise. Cause trouble.

You may not win right away,

but you'll sure have a lot more fun.

- Florynce Kennedy



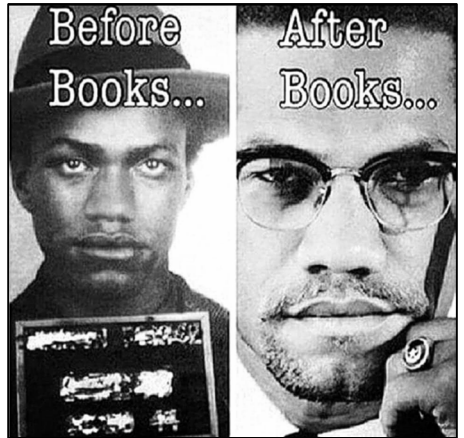
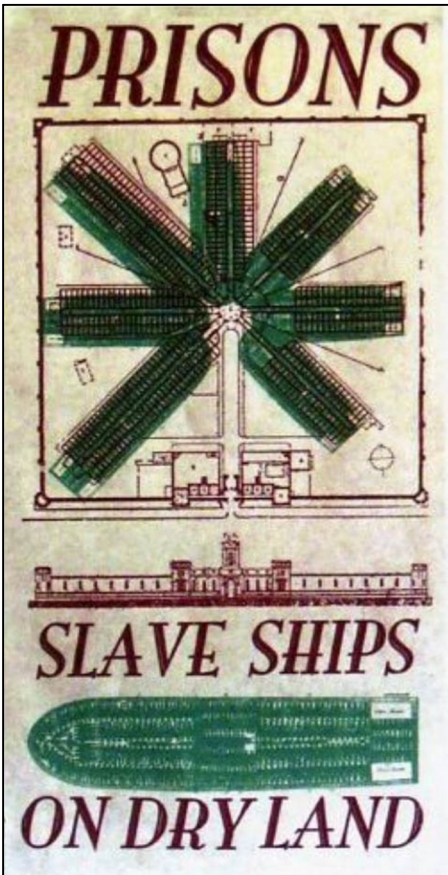
Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI) is a registered charity that organizes volunteer-led book clubs within federal penitentiaries across Canada. Currently, BCFI is facilitating 30 book clubs from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

BCFI runs French and English language book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum, medium, and maximum security facilities. Book clubs are usually made up of 10-18 members who meet once a month to discuss books, both fiction and non-fiction of literary merit.

Every month, hundreds of inmates participate in book clubs across the country and each year thousands of brand new books are purchased, read, and discussed.

Book Clubs for Inmates
720 Bathurst St.
Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4



I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading has opened to me. I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.

- Malcolm X

Those who do not move,
do not notice their chains.
- Rosa Luxemburg

Toll-Free Support Line for SK Prisoners

For prisoners in Provincial jails & Federal prisons in Saskatchewan.

Funds will be used to help inmates purchase call packages to keep them connected to their family, help out with canteen for necessary things & for transportation home. Maintained by prisoner advocacy groups Beyond Prison Walls Canada and Inmates for Humane Conditions.

☎ 1-866-949-0074 ☎

Jail Accountability and Information Line (JAIL) for prisoners in OCDC

The Jail Accountability and Information Line takes calls from prisoners and their loved ones from 1:00pm to 4:00pm Mon to Wed. This line tracks issues experienced by people incarcerated at the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre.

☎ 613-567-JAIL (5245) ☎

Jail Hotline for MCC, OCI, TEDC, TSDC & VCW

The Toronto Prisoners' Rights Project (TPRP) provides prisoners with free links to advocacy, referrals, information, and support through the Jail Hotline. This hotline is run by volunteers. It will take calls on:

*Monday - Saturday
9-11am & 2-4pm*

☎ 416-307-2273 ☎

Why a Jail Hotline?

Prisons and jails carry out human rights abuses every day because they do not think anyone is watching. We are here in solidarity and struggle with prisoners.

Who Should Call This Hotline?

Please share the hotline with your loved ones inside. We cannot accept calls from other prisons or jails or from people in the community.

If you need to contact us outside of the line, you can message us on social media or an email to:

TorontoPrisonersRightsProject@gmail.com

Prison Visiting Rideshare Project

The Prison Rideshare is an ongoing project of Bar None to connect people with rides to visit their friends and loved ones who are in prison in Manitoba.

If you or someone you know is interested in getting a ride to visit one of southern Manitoba's prisons, if you are interested in volunteering, or for more info contact: barnone.wpg@gmail.com

Rides can also be arranged by phone or text message: 204-599-8869 (It's ideal to request a ride at least 5-7 days in advance).

Incarcerated in Canada? Need Information?

Write On! is an all-volunteer group whose goal is to support prisoners in Canada by researching the information you need, such as:

General legal info, prison rules & policies, resources, programs, services, etc.

Write to us at:

Write ON!
234-110 Cumberland St,
Toronto, ON, M5R 3V5

NEW! Jail Hotline for EMDC

*Mon - Wed - Fri - Sat
9-11am & 2-4pm*

☎ 519-642-9289 ☎

You can't turn back the clock.
But you can wind it up again.

- Bonnie Prudden

Children of Inmates Reading Program(ChIRP)

“Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent or caregiver can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning”

“Reading is the gateway to future success in life and in school”

BCFI's commitment to the successful re-integration of inmates and to stronger, healthier communities includes the development of Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP). The mandate of ChIRP is to build and enhance a healthier parent/ child relationship, develop literacy and listening skills, increase vocabulary and attention spans for children and promote a presence of a parent and books.

For the past 10 years, Carla Veitch, a children's educator, has been successfully developing and operating a parent/child reading initiative. Twice a month, Carla, along with another volunteer, enter the institution and offer men the opportunity to select a book for their child and then read that book into a recording device. The book and recording are then mailed to the child.

This initiative provides a direct connection for the child with his or her incarcerated parent. In addition to the opportunity of hearing a parent's voice, the reading initiative underscores the value of reading and the importance of books. For a number of the participants, reading aloud to their child has not been part of their pattern of parenting, nor was it modeled for them as part of their early childhood years.

Children are never responsible for their parents' choices. At the same time, they are the hidden victims not only in the justice and correctional system, but also within our larger community.

Book Clubs for Inmates

720 Bathurst St.

Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4

www.BookClubsForInmates.com

Sanity is a cozy lie.

- Susan Sontag

Just because everything's different,
doesn't mean anything's changed.

- Irene Porter

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.



Nov. 20 is Transgender Day of Remembrance

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), is an international event commemorating people killed due to anti-trans violence. In the last year, 375 trans or non-binary people have been killed globally.

And it's a Canadian problem too: 74% of trans youth in Canada have been harassed at school, and 37% have experienced physical violence.

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.

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.

Vosevi is a combination of sofosbuvir, velpatasvir and voxilaprevir. These three drugs are combined into one tablet. It is taken once a day with food for 12 weeks.

Federal Prisoners: *Great news, now you can start your treatment while inside!*

Provincial/Territorial Prisoners: *Only BC & ON provide treatment. Elsewhere, you will 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 test done so you can get into a Treatment Program at no cost to you.

There are 2,700 with chronic hep C in Federal prisons.

There are 4,380 with chronic hep C in Prov/Terr prisons.

All Federal prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

BC & ON Prov prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

Hep C = 18-30% of prisoners
HIV = 1-5% of prisoners

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

**BLEACH DOES NOT
KILL HEP C**



K.I.P. Canada - Family Visitation

Kids with Incarcerated Parents (K.I.P.) 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.

K.I.P.'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, K.I.P. 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 K.I.P. to register today.

For more information or to book a seat on the bus please contact Jessica or Derek Reid by email at:

*info.kipcanada@gmail.com
or by phone at: 416-505-5333*

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
- Over 5,000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA
- The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increased 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

www.kipcanada.org ~ 416-505-5333

Prison Radio

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

This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio and 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, Lower 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

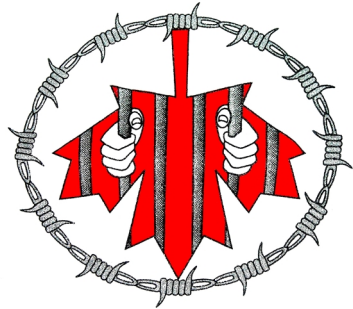
🌀 In Remembrance 🌀
- August 10 -

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



Women's Prison Network
Winter 2022/23 - Issue #29

PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

visit, download, print, donate:

WomensPrisonNetwork.org
info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org

> Mar > Jun > Sep > Dec >

Spring Issue #30 is mailed out:

Mar 1, 2023

Send in your work before:

Feb 1, 2023

Women, Trans & Youth Prisoners:
Wish to receive 'Women's Prison Network'?
Contact us & we will add you to the mailing list!

This tiny bit of paper is by and for you.
Respect - Big Thanks for the Sharing!
