



February 17, 2017

Ms. Sarah Fulford
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Toronto Life Magazine
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Toronto, Ontario
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Via Email

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Re: The \$1-Billion Hellhole, by Raizel Robin

Dear Ms. Fulford:

Thanks to Toronto Life for alerting readers to the crisis in corrections.

The Toronto South Detention Centre is a dangerous place because the Liberal government failed to hire enough Correctional Officers.

Understaffed prisons are unsafe prisons.

You would expect the government to understand this, but they actually tried to open this jail with only one officer for every 40 inmates.

These are the same Liberals that recently agreed to cap kindergarten classes at 30 kids per teacher. That's right, this government actually believed fewer staff are needed to maintain control in a jail than a kindergarten.

The Liberal government is putting health and safety at risk.

Just look at the design of this detention centre. Prefabricated concrete containers were shipped from Georgia and slapped together here. This led to mold, poor air circulation and a nasty smell.

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The result is not healthy for anybody. After all, the inmates' living conditions are the Correctional Officers' working conditions.

With this disregard for basic dignity, it is no wonder four people died in the first two years of operations. Since this detention centre houses men awaiting trial, people are dying without being convicted of a crime.

Canada does not have a death penalty and we must not let our corrections facilities become death traps – for the inmates or the Correctional Officers who are there all day, every day.

These problems are not isolated in one place. Correctional Officers constantly tell me that understaffing is a serious problem at facilities across Ontario.

Corrections Officers and Probations Officers have a difficult and dangerous job to do, as they keep us all safe. A strong sense of dedication leads these brave men and women to perform outstanding work despite trying conditions with purposely limited resources.

The crisis in corrections is a clear example of how the Liberal government's austerity agenda has failed.

Sincerely,



Warren 'Smokey' Thomas
President
Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)