

M S C M
Montreal Southwest Community Ministries



Summer is over and we are all back to our normal routines—with a new Parti Quebecois government—and the House of Commons back in action. What can we expect? Interesting judgments are coming from Ontario Superior Court and some portions of the Omnibus Crime Bill C-10 are coming into force. *The Sou'Wester* will keep you informed, but **MSCM's** launch of their website will bring you a more in-depth take on who we are and what we do. Come for a visit—you'll be surprised at what you can find.

Have anything you would like to submit? Opinions, comments, letters to the Editor are always welcome.

Contact the Editor at mscm@sympatico.ca.

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THE SOU'WESTER

MONTREAL-SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
2012

MSCM LAUNCHES WEBSITE!

Ever wonder what **MSCM** is really all about? Are you aware of our multi-dimensional programs and activities?

Do you know **MSCM's** guiding principles and where we see our role in the criminal justice system?

MSCM's Steering Committee is proud to announce the launch of our website answering all of these questions.

You can find out all about us—everything about our **CoSA Project Division**, Community Building Workshops, **Open**

Door program, special events and activities, our In-Reach program, volunteering and how to sign up, photo gallery—including our Steering Committee members!

We look forward to your visit:

www.mscm-qc.org

**QUEBEC IN MARKET FOR PRISON SPACE
INTERESTED IN FEDERAL LECLERC INSTITUTION**

Quebec has quietly signaled its interest in buying Leclerc Institution, an aging medium-security federal prison set to close by 2015.

A spokesperson from Quebec's Public Security Minister Robert Dutil confirmed the province has told the federal government of its interest as it tries to provide more space in provincial prisons.

"We notified the federal government of our interest in the context of working to increase our prison capacity and one of the scenarios we're studying is Leclerc Institution as an option," said Mathieu St-Pierre.

Julie Carmichael, a spokesperson for Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, said no decisions have been made yet. She noted however, that the federal government's recent

decision to close Leclerc in Laval as well as Kingston Penitentiary and the adjoining Regional Treatment Centre, was based on the fact the facilities no longer meet today's standards.

Critics have argued it's too soon to start closing prisons, saying the government's newly enacted tough-on-crime legislation is expected to lead to increases in the prison populations. Toews has rejected that notion.

Critics have also raised concerns about the impact of new federal crime legislation on provinces. They fear provincial jails, where inmates are held before trial, or post-conviction if sentenced to less than 2 years, could face a population spike as a result.

Spokesperson Valerie Savard said the average daily population in Quebec jails remained stable between 2009-10 and 2010-11 at

about 4,688, but that an increase 'was observed' in 2011-12.

Quebec has been among the most vocal critics of Bill C-10, the omnibus crime bill that passed Royal Assent in March.

The province has pegged the cost of new measures contained in the bill at about \$600 million and has vowed not to pay for it.

Prison guards in Quebec also have argued that the closure of Leclerc, home to a number of rival gang members and organized crime figures, is a 'recipe for disaster'.

Source: Postmedia News

Editor's Note: *With the newly elected Parti Quebecois government we can only wait and see what actions Quebec will take and how the Federal Conservatives will respond.*

STATISTICS CANADA REPORTS

CRIME RATE LOWEST LEVEL IN 40 YEARS!

The rate of crimes reported to Canadian police forces reached its lowest level in 40 years in 2011, Statistics Canada reported at the end of July 2012.

The government agency says there were about two million incidents reported to police last year, about 110,000 fewer than in 2010.

The severity of crime index, a tool used to measure

the extent of serious crime in Canada, also dropped by six per cent.

Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, who has been heavily criticized for his tough-on-crime agenda despite the year-after-year evidence that shows crime rates lowering in Canada, said the latest report suggests the government's policies are working.

The Conservatives' latest omnibus crime bill received

Royal Assent in March 2012, meaning it would *not* affect the most recent Statistics Canada report.

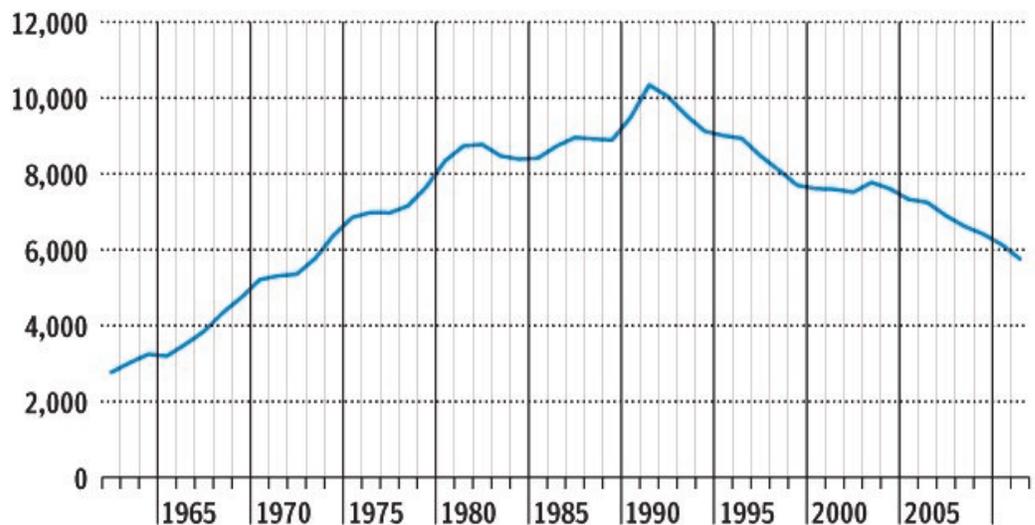
StatsCan says both the crime rate and the severity index declined or remained stable in regions throughout the country.

Decreases were reported in several major categories, including attempted murder, major assaults, sexual assaults, robberies, break-ins and motor vehicle thefts.

Toews takes the credit after Canada reports lowest crime rate since 1972.

CRIME RATE DROPS 6%

**POLICE-REPORTED CRIME RATE
RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION**



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

JONATHON RIVAIT / NATIONAL POST

- Regina, Saskatoon, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg have highest city crime rate
- Guelph, Quebec City, Toronto, Ottawa have the lowest crime rate by city
- Nunavut, N.W.T., the Yukon have highest province/territory crime rate
- Ontario, N.B. and P.E.I. have lowest crime rates by province/territory
- There were 44 more homicides in 2011 in Canada than in 2010
- Since 1991, rate of males charged with violent crime has dropped by 32%
- Since 1991, rate of women charged with violent crime has risen 34%

IN PERSON PROFILE

The Sou'Wester is pleased to introduce Tommy Le, MSCM's website designer and volunteer who hails from British Columbia and is now a Montreal resident.

Q. First off, welcome aboard our team! How did you first learn about MSCM and what brought you to Montreal?

A. Thank you. I'm very excited to join the team. Work brought me to Montreal, and soon after I was introduced to MSCM by your Volunteer Coordinator, Vanessa. After learning a little more about MSCM, I knew this was an organization I had to be a part of.

Q. When and how did you get started in website design?

A. I actually first started dabbling in graphics design in high school—making rockets and cars, I quickly developed a passion for it. It wasn't until I started working as a junior

graphics designer at a large media firm that I was exposed to the possibility of becoming a web designer. Now I do both and absolutely love it.

Q. During the summer you worked very hard creating MSCM's website. How did you find this experience?

A. It has been an amazing experience. Everyone I've worked with has been fantastic and I'm very happy to have worked toward a cause that I believe in. I've been an advocate for Restorative Justice for many years, so it's been a privilege to contribute to the important work that MSCM does.

Q. What other organizations have you created websites for?

A. I've been involved in the design and development of over 100 websites. Variety keeps my work interesting, so I've designed for many different types of organizations.

Feel free to browse my website: www.tommyle.ca to see my latest work.

Q. We understand that you will be participating in our Open Door program. Are you also planning on joining some of our other programs?

A. Yes, I've been a regular at Open Door. I've had a wonderful time listening to the guys and other volunteers share their thoughts, stories and opinions on life. I am also interested in volunteering as an escort driver in the future.

Q. Can any of our members or partners contact you for their website needs? If so, what would be the best way?

A. Yes of course, and the best way is to email me and let me know what you need. If I can accommodate your needs, I'd be happy to set up a meeting to discuss further.



Did you know that Open Door celebrated its 11th Anniversary on September 11, 2012? Why not drop in for a visit? Check out our website for more information.

Editor's Note:
Tommy Le's e-mail address is: le_tommy@hotmail.com.

MSCM's website address is:
www.msccm-qc.org

TACKLING CRIME HARPER'S GOVERNMENT HELPS

Honourable Vic Toews, Canada's Public Safety Minister, announced on September 13th in Winnipeg, that the National Crime Prevention Centre is ready to receive applications for its next funding intake.

"The Harper Government is committed to keeping our streets and communities safe," said Toews. "Youth crime and violence are serious concerns for many Canadian families and communities, which is why I am

happy to announce that we are once again investing in community-based projects that help those who are most at risk of offending. Projects that receive funding will provide at-risk youth with life skills that will empower them to make smart choices and to stay away from crime."

While program authorities have yet to decide what they are going to do with the \$10 million that has already been reserved for Quebec, the authorities did mention that

community groups will have to get busy because they must complete their applications for funding before the October 25th deadline.

Eligible for funding: start-up activities, hiring and training of staff, leased equipment, assorted rental fees for workspace and other facilities, etc. Also included are other assorted outreach initiatives along with any expenses incurred.

Sources:
The Suburban
National Crime Prevention Centre

For further information:
www.publicsafety.gc.ca



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"When it comes to philanthropy, write a cheque your heart can cash."

Jackie A. Strange

Donations of time and service are also welcome.

We are especially looking for volunteers who would be interested in escorting.

Please contact our offices by phone or email, or visit our website:
(514)244-6147
mscm@sympatico.ca
www.mscm-qc.org

Please mail your cheques to:

MSCM
1439 St. Catherine St. West
Montreal, QC
H3G 1S6

SUMMER VILLAGE

no rain for months
the dry river bed is lush
with reeds and greenery
pushing deep into
what little water still trickles
through this village

heron is hiding in the green mass
everything adapts
even the oak leaves
adjust their grandeur
fit their need
to what is at hand

everything adapts
or dies
no creation is beyond the touch
of drought

People paint their houses
no fear of rain.
the dew becomes precious
things must move deep underground
to quench their thirst
where no sun burns
and where the light cannot scorch
the will to survive.

Author: Pamela Dillon

Presented to the Monday Night Chapel group at Cowansville Institution

PLEASE SUPPORT MSCM

MSCM is a volunteer organization welcoming ex-offenders back to the community by supporting them in their social, spiritual, social, emotional and practical needs. We foster restoration and accountability and attend to the needs of all those affected by crime.

MSCM has relied upon support from the Community Chaplaincy of Montreal (Aumônerie de Communautaire de Montréal) and individual donors like you. The stigma associated with offenders brings financial and other challenges with it. Your contribution helps.

I support *MSCM* and their programs and am enclosing a donation of:

- \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: _____

*Note: Cheques less than \$50 should be made payable to **MSCM**.*

Cheques greater than \$50 should be made payable to:

Anglican Diocese of Montreal, memo: MSCM.

Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$50 or greater.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E:mail: _____

STRUCK DOWN BY ONTARIO JUDGE

MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCE

In the latest blow to the Harper government's tough-on-crime agenda, in July an Ontario judge has struck down mandatory minimum sentencing for first-offence firearms trafficking.

The landmark ruling in an Oshawa courthouse centered on the case of a 21-year-old cocaine dealer, who faced the mandatory three-year sentence after offering to sell an undercover policeman a .45 caliber handgun—despite having no access to the gun nor any intention to carry through on the sale.

His lawyer, Jeffrey Mazin, challenged the constitutionality of the sentence, calling it 'cruel and unusual punishment'. While Justice Paul Bellefontaine did not agree the prison term was grossly disproportionate for

the offender, who has racked up numerous convictions over the years, he deemed the law in a broader sense to be fundamentally unconstitutional.

"Parliament has imposed a minimum penalty that addresses a worst case offence but which grossly over penalizes the many lesser ways that the same crime can be committed," Judge Bellefontaine wrote in his 20-page ruling. "The minimum three-year sentence does not address the different degrees of moral blameworthiness associated with the different circumstances under which the offence can be committed."

In addition to dropping the offender's sentence on the firearms issue to one year, Judge Bellefontaine declared Section 99 (2) (a) of the Criminal Code—which sets out a three-

year minimum sentence for first-offence firearms trafficking—to be "invalid and of no force and effect."

This is the second recent setback for the federal government's Tackling Violent Crime Act, which strengthened bail provisions and increased mandatory sentences for serious firearms offences. In February, a Superior Court judge struck down another amended section of the Criminal Code that mandated a three-year minimum for a first-offence loaded firearm possession conviction. The Crown is appealing that decision.

"This ruling demonstrates that not all offences involving firearms, real or imagined, should carry the same penalty," Jeffrey Mazin said. "In this case, it was found that my client neither had the inclination nor the wherewithal to go through with the sale. It's a victory for Charter rights in this country."

A spokesperson for the Crown declined to comment. The federal Justice Department also declined to comment.

Source: The National Post

ONTARIO JUDGE SAYS

DANGEROUS-OFFENDER LAW FLAWED

A relatively new section of the Criminal Code makes it too easy to label certain serial offenders as 'dangerous offenders' and infringes upon the principles of fundamental justice under the Charter, an Ontario judge has ruled in a precedent-setting case.

Typically, when prosecutors want to designate someone a dangerous offender—the label carries the possibility of an indefinite prison sentence—they have to call on the opinion of experts, such as forensic psychiatrists, and prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the offender is dangerous.

But in 2008, the Tackling

Violent Crime Act streamlined the process for certain serial offenders. If someone was convicted at least three times of serious or violent offences, he was automatically presumed to be dangerous and the burden fell on the defence to prove otherwise.

This presumption and the reverse onus of proof, wrote Ontario Superior Court Justice, Alan Bryant on September 13, 2012 is a fundamental change in the dangerous offender process and a 'significant' infringement of Section 7 of the Charter.

Crown lawyers argued that the dangerous offender designation process applied only to a 'small class of individuals

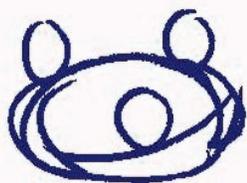
who have proven to be very dangerous in the community'.

But the judge did not accept the Crown counsel's submission that there is a pressing need to streamline the process. He wrote, "A breach of an individual's (Section 7) rights cannot be justified or condoned in a free and democratic society because the class of affected individuals is small."

The defence lawyer, Peter Behr, said the ruling is significant because it upholds the concept that when someone has been found guilty, aggravating facts that could lead to a harsher punishment still need to be proven by the Crown beyond a reasonable doubt.

Even though the judge found the law's presumption that certain serial offenders are dangerous to be a violation of the Charter, he still concluded based on the Crown's evidence the criminal was a dangerous offender.

Source: The Gazette



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"It means a great deal to those who are oppressed to know that they are not alone. And never let anyone tell you that what you are doing is insignificant."

Bishop Desmond Tutu

Source:
www.thestar.com

FEDERAL PRISONERS WILL BE CHARGED MORE FOR ROOM AND BOARD

Federal inmates will be charged more for 'room and board' and telephone services behind bars, and lose incentive pay to work under get-even-tougher-on-offenders changes announced just weeks after the Omnibus Bill C-10 received Royal Assent in March.

Public Safety Minister, Vic Toews called the changes "offender accountability measures" meant to "restore balance" to a system that has too long favoured the rights of offenders over victims.

In addition, the government is supporting two bills introduced by Conservative backbenchers to crack down on so-called "vexatious" grievances by prisoners, and to set up a forced debt recovery scheme to require inmates who win money from lawsuits against the Crown to pay outstanding child support, restitution orders or victim surcharges.

Toews shrugged off questions about whether the additional changes would discourage inmates. "Part of rehabilitation at the top three (of six) levels of inmate pay—paid to those who participate in programs and employment projects within prison walls as part of rehabilitation plans—will start contributing about 32% of their income "toward housing costs."

Inmate pay is already minimal, from \$1 a day to a maximum of \$10 every 2 weeks, up to the top level that pays \$6.90 a day to a

maximum of \$69 every two weeks. It has not changed in more than 30 years, has never been adjusted for inflation, and prisoners who earn the higher amounts, or have other income like pensions, already pay room and board. As well, all inmates must contribute to an inmate welfare fund to cover things like television and cable costs,



organized activities for offenders, inmate donations to charitable groups and legal fees for group actions.

However, Toews said the top-earning inmates should pay about 30% of their income for "room and board" to put them in line with what "most Canadians pay in terms of their own housing costs."

There will be stricter rules governing how prison staff may buy items for inmates from outside suppliers. Toews said too often prison staff made "one-off trips" to fulfill requests. "Institutional staff are not personal shoppers," he said. Staff now will schedule trips to a set list of stores, or order from a catalogue the items requested that are paid for with the inmates' own money.

Correctional Investigator, Howard Sapers, testifying about a private member's bill to

garnish any money an inmate might win from a lawsuit against the Crown, told a Commons committee to carefully consider changes.

Although inmate pay has not been adjusted since 1981, the cost of purchasing minor items has skyrocketed. The standard basket of goods available at a prison canteen—sold at a 10% profit margin—has increased from \$8.49 to \$61.59, a 725% increase.

In the past 3 years, Correctional Services has cut the non-essential healthcare services it covers, and required non-prescription items like Tylenol or medicated shampoo bought through the inmate canteen. Sapers said a 100ml bottle of Buckley's cough syrup sells for \$7.58 inside—"more than one day's wages."

"My point here is simply to say that crime does not, in fact, pay," said Sapers. "Prison rarely captures the affluent. Most offenders have no savings and their earning capacity inside a federal institution is extremely limited. There seems little point to diverting earnings that at best will only minimally support release. It is not unusual for a released offender to be facing thousands of dollars of accumulated debt and only limited employment opportunities."

Sapers said while "part of an offender's reintegration should include the satisfaction of debts to the best of their ability," he is concerned the proposal 'may prove both unworkable and counterproductive."

INNOVATIVE IDEA:
NEW YORK UNVEILS 'SOCIAL-IMPACT' BOND

New York City will try to reduce the recidivism of young male convicts housed on Rikers Island with a four-year program run by non-profits and financed by Goldman Sachs Group Inc.

The bank will invest \$9.6 million through a so-called social-impact bond, meaning it will profit only if the plan achieves its goals. New York officials said the program is the first of its kind in the US.

"In this new model, private investors fund the intervention through a non-profit contractor and the government pays the contractor only if the program meets its goals,"

Mayor Michael Bloomberg's office said in a statement.

For Goldman Sachs to earn a profit, the program will need to reduce recidivism by at least 10%. City payments to MDRC, a non-profit social-policy group created by the Ford Foundation that will monitor and run the program, also will be based on its degree of success. The Vera Institute of Justice will independently assess the program's effectiveness, said the mayor's office.

Goldman Sachs will fully fund the four-year program, called the Adolescent Behavioral Learning Experience, through a loan to New York based MDRC. Bloomberg Philanthropies, the mayor's private charity, will provide \$7.2 million to MDRC to back a portion of Goldman Sachs' loan. There will be a cost to the city only

Two other New York-based non-profits, the Osborne Association and Friends of Island Academy, will also deliver recreational activities "to reduce idleness, promote team-building and afford opportunities for adolescents to practice what they are learning in a variety of settings and circumstances," the mayor's office said.



Rikers Island, New York

if the program succeeds, the mayor's office said.

"This investment paves the way for a new type of instrument that enables the public sector to leverage upfront funding from the private sector," Lloyd Blanford, Goldman Sachs' chief executive officer, said in a statement.

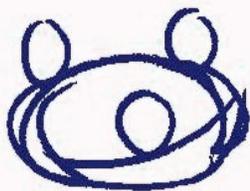
The program's targets are inmates ages 16 to 18, whose recidivism rate is now about 50%. Inmates will receive education, training and counseling to improve personal responsibility skills, including decision-making and problem-solving.

The program is part of the Bloomberg administration's privately supported \$30-million Young Men's Initiative, which seeks ways to improve productivity and reduce risk of poverty for young males.

It is also part of a national search by Bloomberg's foundation to find innovative policies and practices to deal with difficult urban problems, the mayor's office said. To further that effort, the mayor offered \$9 million in prizes to US cities through the foundation in a competition for ideas that local governments can use to solve problems.

Source: Bloomberg News

"Lessons learned from the nation's first social-impact bond will be shared with other jurisdictions who are eager to test the approach," Mayor Bloomberg's news release said.



MSCM
Montreal Southwest Community Ministries

1439 St. Catherine St. West
Montreal, QC
H3G 1S6

Tel: (514) 244-6147
Fax: (514) 284-5070

E-mail:
mscm@sympatico.ca

Website:
www.mscm-qc.org

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*"Be nice to people
on your way up,
because you will meet them
on the way down."*

Jimmy Durante

NECESSITIES

A woman was walking down the street when she was accosted by a particularly dirty and shabby-looking homeless woman who asked her for a couple of dollars for dinner.

The woman took out her purse, extracted ten dollars and asked, "If I give you this money, will you buy some wine with it instead of dinner?"

"No, I had to stop drinking years ago", the homeless woman replied.

"Will you use it to go shopping instead of buying food?" the woman asked.

"No, I don't waste time shopping", the homeless woman said. "I need to spend all my time trying to stay alive."

"Will you spend this on a beauty salon instead of food?" the woman asked.

"Are you NUTS!" replied the homeless woman. "I haven't had my hair done in 20 years!"

"Well", said the woman, "I'm not going to give you the money. Instead, I'm going to take you out for dinner with my husband and myself tonight."

The homeless woman was astounded. "Won't your husband be furious with you for doing that? I know I'm dirty and I probably smell pretty disgusting."

The woman replied, "That's okay. It's important for him to see what a woman looks like after she has given up shopping, hair appointments and wine."



MIDDLE AGE 'TEXTING' CODES

ATD:	at the doctor.
BFF:	best friend fell.
BTW:	bring the wheelchair.
BYOT:	bring your own teeth.
FWIW:	forgot where I was.
GGPBL:	gotta go, pacemaker battery low.
GHA:	got heartburn again.
IMHO:	is my hearing aid on?
LMDO:	laughing my dentures out.
OMMR:	on my massage recliner.
TTYL:	talk to you louder!
ROFLACGU:	rolling on floor laughing and can't get up.

THE LAST LAUGH

- ◆ I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.
- ◆ Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
- ◆ If God is watching us, the least we can do is be entertaining.
- ◆ Déjà vu—when you think you're doing something you've done before, it's because God thought it was so funny, he had to rewind it for his friends.
- ◆ Why do people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older? They are cramming for their finals.