

# LSD Experiments at the Prison for Women

## A letter to the Correctional Service Commissioner

March 3, 1998

Mr. Ole Ingstrup  
Commissioner  
Correctional Service of Canada  
340 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa Ontario  
K1A 0P9

Dear Commissioner Ingstrup:

### **Re: L.S.D. Experiments at the Prison for Women in Kingston**

I am writing to request additional information and offer CAEFS' assistance and support for a speedy resolution to the matter captionally referred to above.

I am very concerned that the resolution of this matter be achieved as soon as possible. I am advised that you received the report of the Board of Investigation approximately six months ago. As a result of the recent media reports, including today's report in the Ottawa Citizen, it is unclear as to whether or not you have accepted the findings of the investigators. It seems that you are suggesting that you cannot implement the recommendations of the Board of Investigation until such time as you have re-examined all of the evidence.

You also seem to be suggesting that, without further information, it would be unreasonable to proceed to compensate the women who were identified by the Board. After reviewing the report of the Board of Investigation into Allegations of Mistreatment by a Former Inmate at the Prison for Women Between March 22, 1960 and August 1, 1963, it is difficult to imagine what further proof you require of "a direct link" between the treatment and current difficulties of at least the two women whose histories are chronicled. As the investigators point out at page 42 of the report, it seems abundantly evident that for these women, the administration of L.S.D. to these women while they were imprisoned at the Prison for Women did indeed result in "substantial, debilitating, long term negative effects". How much more direct a link must the women establish?

We urge you to immediately offer compensatory settlements to Ms. Proctor and the unnamed former prisoner who was also interviewed by the Board of Investigation. We also urge you to continue efforts to locate the additional 20+ women who were part of the experiments. Given the obvious sensitivity of these issues and the likelihood that women may not wish to have their families and circumstances jeopardized by unwanted publicity, we further urge you to encourage women to come forth by providing assurances of anonymity.

Given the reality that their past experiences may discourage women from coming forth voluntarily to re-identify themselves to/with the Correctional Service of Canada, we wish to offer our assistance in this regard. My conversations with the members of the Board of Investigation have confirmed that there is a need for some assurances of confidentiality and anonymity before other women are likely to come forth. Even then, none may.

Obviously, you also need to be in a position to satisfy yourselves of the veracity of women's claims. CAEFS has taken on a similar role in the past. For instance, during the research phase of our battered women's defence work, we faced the challenge of trying to locate women who wanted assistance, but did not wish to be identified publicly. We would be pleased to facilitate contacts for women, as well as provide

personal support and assist women wanting to come forward. We would, of course, respect the wishes of those women who want to retain their anonymity, while simultaneously facilitating the collection of information necessary to substantiate their claims.

It is clear from the Minister's comments that he is committed to ensuring that the women prisoners who were subjected to the L.S.D. experiments are now treated fairly and that they will finally experience a speedy and just resolution in this matter. Although we are concerned about the delay in the resolution of this matter to date, we trust that this is also your objective and we therefore offer our assistance in achieving this end. Accordingly, I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience in order to facilitate the coordination of our efforts.

Sincerely,

Kim Pate,  
Executive Director

cc The Honourable Andy Scott  
Solicitor General of Canada

CAEFS' Membership