

How do we judge the infirm?

Politics is seemingly complicating the efforts of judges to issue just sentences in certain criminal cases.

In at least two instances last month, criminals avoided custodial sentences because a judge handling their hearings decided that due to a lack of infirmity capacity in the provincial corrections system, it would be inappropriate to put them behind bars.

The men's cases called out for jail time. One is a sex offender.

The other was an impaired driver. However, the judge concluded that because of medical issues they're dealing with it, it would not have been safe to send them behind bars because of infirmity limitations linked to facilities where sentenced men are sent.

The judge's consideration of this issue, his willingness to have this issue influence his ruling and his openness in court about why he was sentencing such cases to non-custodial dispositions is noteworthy and commendable.

These are also rulings, however, that should spur public and political attention.

What the court is saying is that its ability to deliver justice is impaired because of a resource issue.

The lack of a functioning infirmary at the recently opened Toronto South Detention Centre and how that has resulted in ill people being placed in segregation at the facility, just due to their health, is not a new issue.

The Ontario ombud's office signalled in December it was monitoring the issue of sick provincial inmates being kept in solitary confinement and has since disclosed it has fielded multiple complaints about this in relation to the Toronto facility.

The province disputes the suggestion that ill inmates are being placed in at-risk circumstances regarding their health.

It also asserts the Toronto infirmary is to open later this spring — more than a year after the centre opened.

Opposition MPs suggest the province is engaging in spin on this file.

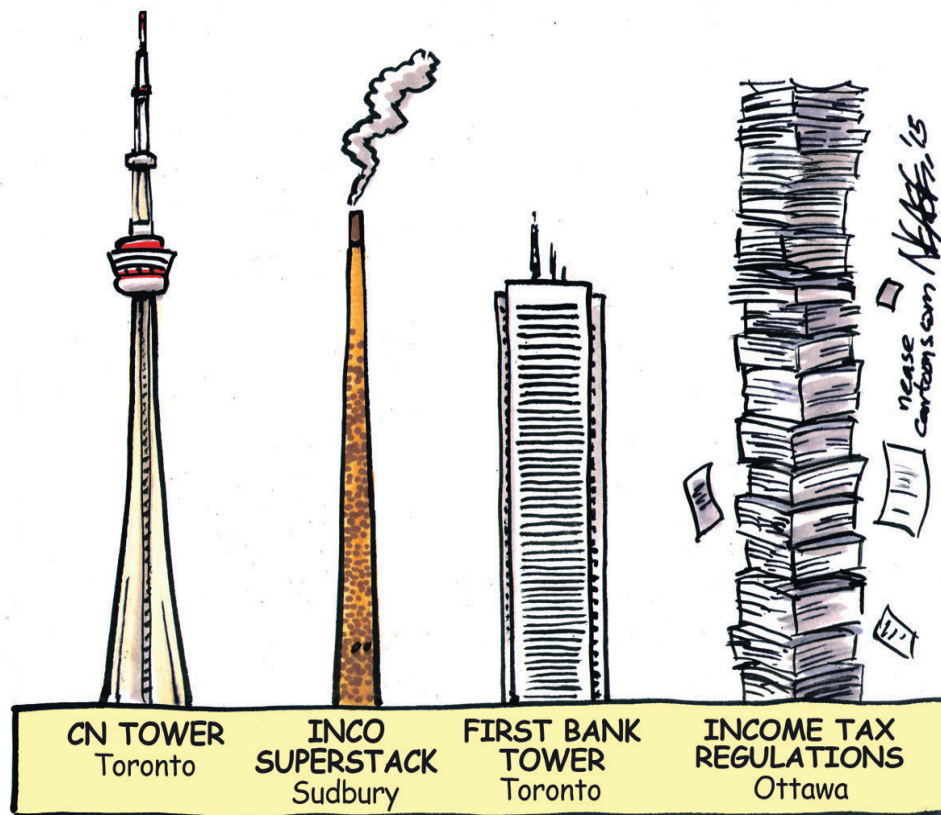
We hope the Toronto infirmary opens soon, for a host of reasons.

The current state of affairs appears to present challenges for justice to be served in certain local cases.

The Independent & Free Press

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CANADA'S TALLEST STRUCTURES



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Letters to the editor

Don't wait till you're 70

I'll be back when I reach 70!

Overheard at the Georgetown Market Place while promoting Lawn Bowling.

I was quite taken back by this flip-pant comment because it is typical of the misconception many Canadians have to lawn bowling.

Lawn bowling is definitely not restricted to persons of senior years. Indeed, some of the best lawn bowlers in Canada are of youthful age. It is indeed one of the only sports considered to be inter-generational. Where a grandchild can compete well with his or her grandparent.

The OLBA promotional material shows it well with images of three generations. You will also find males and females competing together.

We at the Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club are suffering from this misconception.

There is much difficulty attracting the younger segment of our community and it is so important to have new younger blood take up this sport. Our members

are indeed mostly of the older demographic. As we get older we can no longer keep up with the tournament demands of all day bowling or with the management of the club house and greens on which we bowl.

One problem we face is that the lawn bowling season conflicts with many other summer activities. Vacations, cottage life and summer jobs take up the lives of many, who would make great lawn bowlers. What they haven't considered is that lawn bowling is a wonderfully satisfying and social activity that is low cost and provides good outdoor exercise. A 10 end game of bowls last about 90 minutes and could easily be fitted into even a busy schedule.

Don't wait until you're 70 because we may not be here when you get there!

Frank Anthony,
Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club

Thanks a lot

I have worked at the Georgetown Denture Clinic here in town for over 30 years and I have been touched by many good deeds during my career and I wanted to share a

recent 'feel good' story.

A very elderly, wheelchair-bound patient who lives at the Bennett Health Care Centre, and also happens to be a war veteran, called me early one morning, needing his denture repaired.

He wanted it done as soon as possible, but we were very busy and unable to get there until later that afternoon. Upon overhearing my conversation, one of our long-time patients offered to drive over to the Bennett, pick up the denture, and bring it back — which he did with a big smile on his face, even though it was one of the coldest days of the year. I thanked him profusely, and he said that it was his pleasure to 'pay it forward' especially for a war vet. I really do love my job.

Kelly Trenton,
Halton Hills

Letters policy

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