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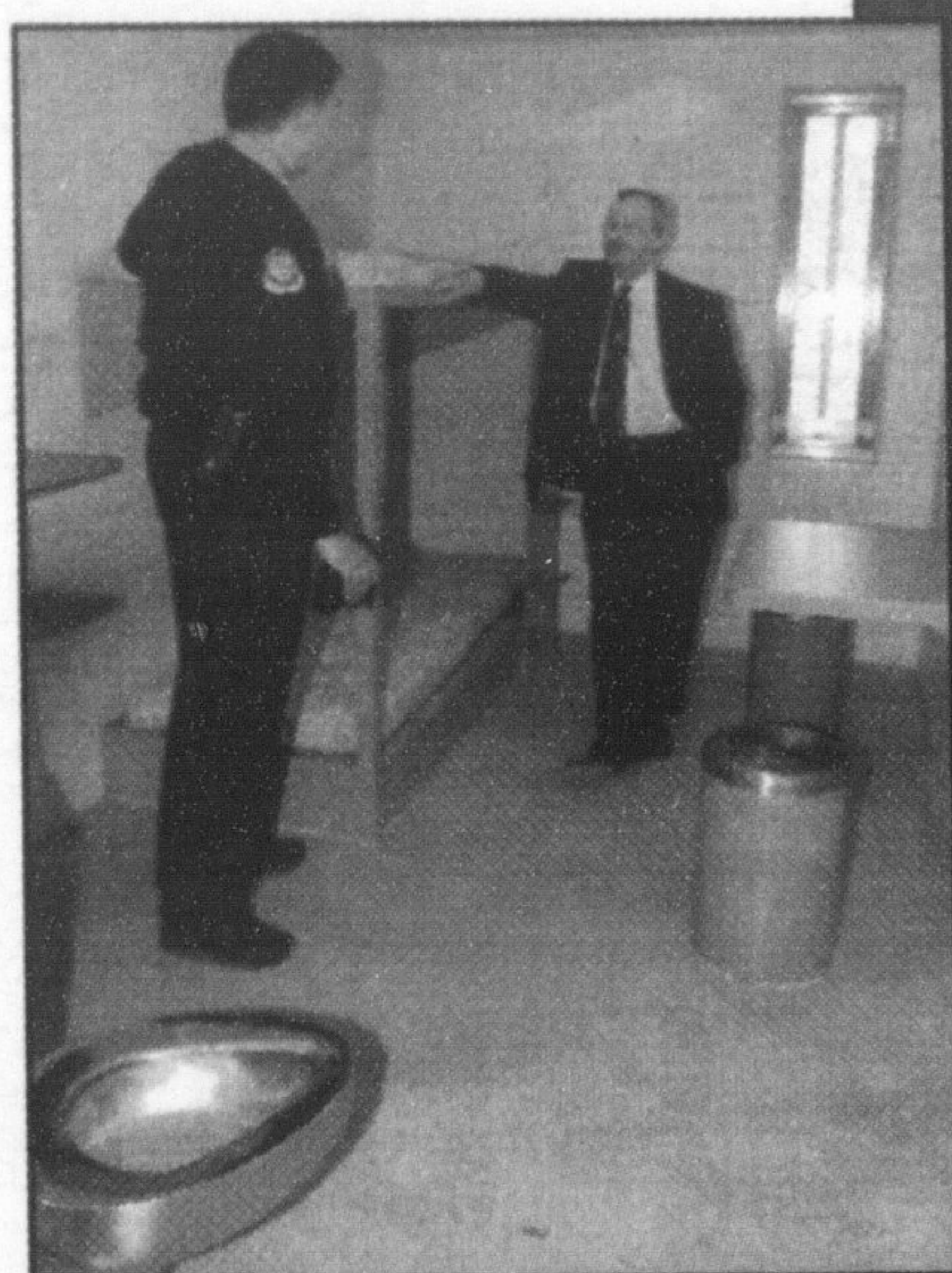
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At right, Ontario Correctional Services Minister Rob Sampson speaks to reporters in one of the 16-cell, two-tier pods at Milton's new Maplehurst 'superjail' during the official opening yesterday. Above, Mr. Sampson is shown one of the cells by correctional officer Victor Danylchenko.

Photos by GRAHAM PAINE



Milton's 'superjail' officially open

Up to 1,500 inmates expected in a few weeks

By FANNIE SUNSHINE

The Champion

Milton is the official home of the first 'superjail' complex in Ontario.

The newly-expanded Maplehurst Correctional Centre was officially opened yesterday and inmates are expected to arrive within the next few weeks.

The maximum security complex, which took almost three years to complete at a cost of \$89 million, occupies 29,200 square metres of new construction and has the capacity to house 1,500 inmates.

"This facility introduces a new era in Ontario corrections and is a significant step in moving from old, inefficient jails to modern, safe, no-frills institutions that represent a responsible use of tax-

payers' dollars," Ontario Correctional Services Minister Rob Sampson told reporters at a press conference held inside the new facility yesterday.

"This government's main priority is public safety and ensuring we have a corrections system that is safe, secure, effective, efficient and accountable."

Mayor Gord Krantz, who was also on hand at the opening, said he's been looking forward to the new facility for more than two years.

"I've always supported the Maplehurst location in the community. We're all interested in the future of Maplehurst and the future of the community."

Maplehurst will be the largest jail in Canada, with 21 different types of security systems and 300 metres of razor ribbon.

Currently, prisoners are housed in two separate areas. The first houses inmates that have been sen-

tenced to two years less a day and the second area is a detention centre for holding prisoners in custody awaiting court procedures.

Inmates from both sections of the complex will be housed in the four new units, designed as pods. The old facility will be constructed to a retro fit.

The pods are self-contained, 192-bed units in which male inmates spend their days. Each pod is divided into eight "slices" — six living units consisting of 16 cells (two inmates per cell) eight tables and a showering area, an outdoor yard and a hallway for laundry and health care facilities. The design is similar to the West Valley Correctional Centre in California.

The design will also be featured at the new Central North Correctional Centre in Penetanguishene and Central East Correctional Centre in Lindsay, which are currently under construction.

• see PRISONERS on page 11

INSIDE

Comment	6
HS Report	8
A&E	10
Dateline	16-17
Sports	22-24
Classified	25-27

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