

MILTON CINEMAS

121 CHISHOLM RD.
(W. of Hwy. 25 + S. of 401)
24 HOUR INFORMATION LINE 876-3333

PG	Happy Gilmore Nightly at 7:00 only
PG	Ed Nightly at 9:15 pm only March 22 - 24 • Matinee at 2:00 pm
PG	Down Periscope Nightly at 7:00 pm only March 22 - 24 • Matinee at 2:00 pm
PG	Mr. Holland's Opus Nightly at 8:30 pm only
AA	Up Close & Personal Nightly at 7:00 pm & 9:15 pm

REMEMBER \$4.25 TUESDAY
ALL MATINEE SEATS \$4.25

Tensions continue to mount at jail

• from POWDERKEG on page 1

housed 418 inmates while the detention section housed a crowded 331. Mr. Leithead said that given crowded conditions at detention centres across Ontario the crowding was not unusual.

With normal search procedures suspended due to manpower reductions, correctional officers in the more dangerous detention centre are becoming increasingly fearful of dealing with prisoners. Some are refusing to work, and are demanding occupational health and safety inspectors come in, as per terms of labour agreements, and conduct an investigation.

However, inspectors are members of OPSEU, and they are on strike. A skeleton staff of managers are issuing health and safety decisions over the phone, according

to correctional officer and Maplehurst health and safety co-chair Paula Wilson, who says legislation requires the investigations to be conducted in person.

"Working conditions are endangering staff," said Ms Wilson. "They aren't complying with their own ministry policies."

Union representatives said more than 40 disputes under the health and safety legislation have been filed but none have been resolved in the proper manner.

Different views

Mr. Leithead said OPSEU members and administration have different views of what constitutes essential services.

While the pot boils along the picket line, inmates feel they are pawns in the game. Inmates, dressed in blue prison uniforms and hand-picked by administration for an interview, say they want their routines restored and blame guards for stirring up trouble. Guards claim administration is buying the prisoners co-operation and comments with food and privileges.

"This is not standard stuff. It's gone beyond the boiling point and things might boil over," said Maplehurst inmate William Darroch. "Normally about 70 per cent of people would be working or going to school. Now nobody has anything to do. People are getting jumped. Fights are breaking out."

Mr. Darroch claimed OPSEU members were trying to incite the inmates into causing problems to put pressure on prison administration and ultimately the provincial government. Union representative Bill Gillies said prison management has blamed union members for actions management has taken which have reduced prisoners' privileges. "So who is trying to piss off the inmates?," he asked.

Prisoners, caught in between the warring factions, were not happy about it.

"The union people should be thankful they have jobs. They should take the cuts

like anyone else. We've had our daily allowance cut from \$10 to \$5 and we have to buy board games and don't get movies anymore," said Mr. Darroch. "We've been told by guards 'that's the way it is, so get used to it' but the union won't accept the same thing."

Inmate Bruce Pellerin wondered if correctional officers should be allowed to strike because they are charged with the care and control of human beings.

"I can be sympathetic to the union's demands, but does the end justify the means? We are human beings. Many people in here are first time offenders, people who sincerely regret getting themselves into situations which led to them coming here. They won't be back, but they are living in an unsafe situation," Mr. Pellerin said. "These guys should be at work. We're not parts made in a factory. Society takes the responsibility when it puts us here. When basic needs are not met, that's not right."

Mr. Pellerin said all inmates he spoke with generally shared his views, but Mr. Darroch was not as sure — uncomfortable speaking for others.

"All program activity, school, volunteers, self-help groups and recreation is not happening," Mr. Leithead said. "It's not even as busy here as it would normally be on a weekend."

Paper plates

Routines have changed. Meals are being served on paper plates because staff are not available to clean dishes, Mr. Leithead said. In addition changes have been made to the normal menu, such as reductions of items that require long preparation times and an increase of frozen foods.

Picketers have made the delivery of milk and bread difficult, along with items such as tobacco and magazines which would normally be sold to the prisoners. Mr. Leithead could not pinpoint why the items had not been delivered.

The picketers have a picket protocol where they require people entering and leaving the grounds to wait for 15 minutes before being admitted. Police have attended the line numerous times, Mr. Leithead said items have not been delivered because they haven't gotten through the picket line. It is unclear whether the items have been stopped, or deliverers are sympathetic with the strike and refuse to cross picket lines.

"It's been a difficult time for everyone, staff, managers and inmates, who I think have been quite reasonable. They are caught in the middle of an issue that isn't theirs," Mr. Leithead said. Garbage was recently removed from the facility to the relief of Mr. Leithead, who said he was worried the accumulating waste would constitute a health risk.

"We are not trying to deny inevitable job losses," said OPSEU local 234 president Susan Coker, who was disdainful of media coverage. "However, there is a misconception about the size of the Ontario public service."

Mr. Gillies said the strike boiled down to public servants having the same employment rights as enjoyed by employees in the private sector regarding ownership changes, transfer rights and severance.

Mr. Pellerin called changes ushered in by the Ontario government "the destruction of the middle class" and said people are happy with cuts by the Harris government until cuts affect them personally.

A striking corrections officer said changes by the government "are just the beginning" for all employees across Ontario and added, "public servants with good job conditions and benefits set a standard for fair treatment of employees across the province."

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'94 F150 ENFORCER XL
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PLAN TO PAY **\$276⁰⁰** /MO



'94 ESCORT LX WAGON
Stk. #654A 1.9L 4 cyl., auto trans., air conditioning, AM/FM cass., power steering, power brakes, tinted glass, power remote mirrors, luggage rack, rear wiper washer, red exterior, medium grey interior.

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