



## Canadian Friends Service Committee **E-Newsletter**

January, 2018

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### **CFSC is hiring a Criminal Justice Program Coordinator**

CFSC is hiring a criminal justice program coordinator to be based at our office in Toronto. This is a half-time position (17.5 work hours/week). Work includes:

- Research, education, and writing on criminal justice-related issues
- Policy dialogue on criminal justice-related issues
- Administering community-based grants, workshops, and training
- Relationship building in the justice community
- Administrative support to the program and program activities

The ideal candidate would have a background in **two or more** of the following: restorative justice, human rights, children and child rights, and the Canadian Criminal Justice system.

To see the full posting visit <http://quakerservice.ca/jobs> **Application deadline is 9 am Eastern on Monday February 5, 2018**

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### **BC says indefinite solitary unconstitutional & Ontario limits its use**

We've had two pieces of good news in the ongoing campaign to abolish administrative segregation (commonly called "solitary confinement") in Canada. Firstly, the Supreme Court of British Columbia has ruled indefinite solitary "unconstitutional." Justice Peter Leask found that current laws around segregation in prisons cause "significant risk of serious psychological harm, including mental pain and suffering, and increased incidence of self-harm and suicide." Leask's decision noted particular harms being done to Indigenous inmates, and ones with mental health problems. Jay Aubrey, a lawyer at the BC Civil Liberties Association called this "the most significant prison law decision from a trial court in Canadian history." The decision gives the federal government one year to make reforms. Meanwhile the Ontario government has announced that inmates with mental health problems will no longer be placed in solitary, except in "exceptional circumstances." The province has also committed to providing better mental health services to inmates.

For more information see: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/charter-solitary-confinement-bc-ruling-1.4491526>; <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2018/01/18/ontario-to-stop-placing-inmates-with-mental-health-disabilities-in-solitary-confinement.html>; and CFSC's concerns about segregation: <http://quakerservice.ca/news/segregation/>

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### **Open letter calls for Canada to be proactive on the question of Jerusalem**

CFSC has written to the Prime Minister expressing pleasure at Canada's embassy remaining in Tel Aviv but concern over the worsening situation in Jerusalem. The letter notes that Jerusalem is uniquely special to multiple religions and to the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. The letter calls on Canada to actively condemn any and all violations of international law, noting, "The delicacy of this

situation cannot excuse Canada from taking principled action to support the well-being and dignity of all.” Read more at <http://quakerservice.ca/Jerusalem>

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## Synthetic biology update 2018

What better way to start the year than with another installation of our synthetic biology updates? Since 2014, we’ve published simple updates about what synthetic biology is and how it’s being used.

In this update you’ll find:

- The latest on “gene drives” that one day might eradicate entire species in the wild
- Possible conflicts of interest, some undisclosed, among top science advisors
- Research into editing human embryos in ways that can be inherited by future generations – how it’s being reported and the range of perspectives in the debate
- Medical applications of synthetic biology and a timely study from *The Lancet* revealing a major problem in medical systems
- A new database of the 75 or so synthetic biology ingredients already found in cosmetics, supplements, flavours, and fragrances
- A new submission by Canada describing its approach to synthetic biology, including regulations
- Attempts to control the use of synthetic biology in athletes
- The “biohackers” experimenting on themselves with untested synthetic biology
- Attempts to identify if an organism has been tampered with through synthetic biology techniques
- Synthetic biology in cows
- How the stock prices of the top synthetic biology companies are doing
- A company claiming it will clone your dog
- DNA being used as malware.

<http://quakerservice.ca/SB2018>

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