

October 26, 2005

The Hon. Monte Kwinter
Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services
25 Grosvenor Street, 18th floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y6

Dear Mr. Kwinter:

**Re: 50 Cent movie, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, filmed in Toronto
Release date: November 9, 2005**

In April last year, then police chief Julian Fantino told a Toronto town hall meeting that he had tried to prevent the violent rapper, 50 Cent, from coming to Canada by writing several times to the federal immigration minister. Chief Fantino did this, he said, because 50 Cent's lyrics advocate raping women and murder.¹ The Chief also mentioned that a man had been shot dead at a 50 Cent concert when he performed at the Molson Amphitheatre in July of 2003. Despite the Chief's efforts, 50 Cent was allowed into Canada and appeared in Hamilton and Montreal in April 2004.² Two weeks after the Chief spoke at the meeting, a man was shot at the 50 Cent concert in Montreal, although his bullet-proof vest saved him from serious injury.



For some reason, this violent person, who has a criminal record and a demonstrated history of attracting murderous people to his concerts, was in Toronto this past June³ filming scenes from his gangster movie *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, scheduled for release on November 9. 50 Cent also has a violent video game called *Bulletproof* scheduled for release the same month. A double gangster whammy for his impressionable fans.

I invite you to visit 50 Cent's web site at www.50cent.com to witness the glorification of guns that features prominently, and also the movie site at www.getrichordietryingmovie.com. Note the use of a gun to indicate when a new page is "loading". Clever.

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In order to film in the city of Toronto, a production company requires a permit from the city film office. Possibly, the people who hand out permits live in walled compounds and are therefore protected from the gangs who regularly shoot up the streets of Toronto. Or maybe they just don't care about the lives of the people who pay their salaries -- the taxpayers of Toronto. Either way, the situation is an outrage.

Following is a description of the 50 Cent concert in Hamilton:

As the lights dimmed in Copps Coliseum, a black curtain dropped to reveal a huge G Unit "Beg For Mercy" banner. The sound of a shotgun being cocked echoed through the arena as G Unit members Lloyd Banks and Young Buck walked on stage. After greeting the crowd, a half-dozen gunshots erupted from the speakers as 50 Cent strutted out of the shadows...⁴

This violent former drug-dealer has been credited with putting the "thug" back in rap music, as this quote illustrates:

As a result, he [50 Cent] is leading a renewed demand for, or at least acceptance of, rappers armed with a street-thug image and violent lyrics. Not since the 1996-97 murders of rappers Tupac Shakur and the Notorious B.I.G. has mainstream hip-hop been so filled with guns, gang-style feuds and songs about killing.⁵



As you are no doubt aware, a recent Ipsos poll showed that 63% of the survey's respondents believe the glamorization of gang culture found in movies and rap music is contributing to the increase in Toronto's gun violence.⁶ I think those people would be very disturbed to find out that we have hosted the filming of a movie by one of the most violent thug rappers in the industry.

I think they will be even more disturbed if the production company receives tax credits from the province of Ontario. Production companies don't come to Hollywood North for the weather, they come here for the generous system of tax credits we offer. I am therefore requesting that you contact the Minister responsible and ensure that the movie *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* does not receive tax credits from the province of Ontario. People living with gang violence should not be forced to fund movies that contribute to that violence.

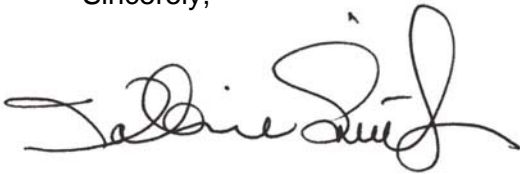
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I am also requesting that you meet with Mayor David Miller to ensure that productions by violent rappers such as 50 Cent are prohibited from filming in Toronto in future. It is the height of hypocrisy for politicians to hold press conferences denouncing gang violence, while permitting this use of our city by sociopaths like 50 Cent, who care nothing for the murder and mayhem they foster.

For additional information on this destructive genre of music, please see the Music section in the *Action Agenda: A Strategic Blueprint for Reducing Exposure to Media Violence in Canada*, a report funded and published by Ontario's Office for Victims of Crime, and the Music section on my web site at www.fradical.com.

I look forward to a positive response on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Valerie Smith', with a stylized, cursive script.

Valerie Smith

Cc: The Hon. Michael Bryant, Attorney General
John Tory, MPP
Robert Runciman, MPP
Garfield Dunlop, MPP
Peter Kormos, MPP
Julian Fantino, Commissioner of Emergency Management
Mayor David Miller
Chief Bill Blair, Toronto Police Service

¹ *Fantino labels rap star 'criminal'*, Toronto Star, April 14, 2004

² *Bullet-proof vest protects Montreal concert-goer*, Toronto Sun, April 24, 2004

³ *But 50 Cent will not be in lineup*, Toronto Sun, June 17, 2005

⁴ *50 Cent and G Unit go for broke in Hamilton*, ChartAttack.com, April 23, 2004

⁵ *50 brings return of gangsta rap*, Minneapolis St. Paul Star Tribune, July 25, 2003

⁶ *Gun crime biggest fear*, National Post, October 25, 2005