

CFUW Ontario Council
October 11, 2006

Faces of the Cuts: The Impact of Federal Program Cuts on Communities in Toronto

A forum convened by the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto.

The Community Social Planning Council invited members of local community organizations in Toronto to identify the impact of the federal program cuts and to strategize possible responses to the current Conservative government. The booklet "**Faces of the Cuts**", containing information on the funding cuts to selected areas is available at <http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/Index3.htm>. As well the website <http://www.statusreport.ca> concerns the cuts as well.

The forum was held on Wed. Oct. 11th, 2006 at the Ontario Bar Association Headquarters in Toronto. Representing CFUW was Ardith Toogood, President, Linda MacGregor, VP Ontario and Margaret McGovern, past Director of Status of Women and Human Rights.

Speakers from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), Canadian Volunteerism Initiative program, National Anti-Racism Council of Canada, Ontario Council of Canadians Serving Immigrants, CUPE and the YWCA presented a brief synopsis on the impact these cuts will have on their work in the social services. Showing their support for the groups in attendance were Olivia Chow, MP for Trinity-Spadina and Peggy Nash, MP for Parkdale-High Park. CFUW President, Ardith Toogood gave the perspective of our self-funded organization and the advocacy actions our federation has taken on behalf of women, children and all marginalized members of our society. Cuts will clearly see programs on adult literacy, volunteerism, court challenges and youth employment unable to effectively serve the disadvantaged in our communities.

Amanda Dale from YWCA commented that prohibiting the use of advocacy and lobbying by women's organizations is an attack on democracy by the current Conservative government. What was even more alarming to her was the statement that the work of women's groups is now irrelevant since women are already equal. New guidelines for funding from SWC will prohibit funding for organizations that advocate, lobby and do general research. They must be incorporated and for the first time, government funding is now available to for-profit organizations. *That makes it very difficult because, if you don't lobby and you don't advocate, you're not going to make systemic changes.* Alia Hogben, Executive Director of the CCMW.

According to Eileen Russell, a senior economist with the CCPA, social and equity programs will suffer additional cuts in the future as the Conservatives need to find more than \$17 B in the current fiscal year to fund an agenda that includes tax cuts, defence spending, and their pseudo-child care program.

Go to <http://www.rabble.ca/politics.shtml?x=5307> for the full article by Ms. Russell.