

NAWL survives the Harper Government!

March, 2008

Thanks to the efforts of their National Steering Committee and significant donations from unions, individuals & organizations, the National Association of Women and Law (NAWL) has secured enough funding to hire Pamela Cross as their Director of Strategic Planning. Pamela is a lawyer and community activist with extensive experience. She was also NAWL's Executive Director from 2006-2007.

Pamela will work with the Board to plan and implement a strategic vision for NAWL that will ensure it can continue its essential mandate and unique role in the women's movement.

Three cheers for the women and sister organizations who made this happen!

(Below is our original issue page on NAWL's closure)

Shut-up or Shutdown

Leading Women's Advocacy Group forced to close its doors thanks to Feds

September, 2007

The National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL) is the first casualty of the Harper government's anti-equality agenda. The women's research and advocacy group had to close shop earlier this month after losing its operating budget of \$300,000. This is thanks to the rejigging of Status of Women Canada (SWC) funding by the federal government.

"Today is a black day for women's equality," said our President, Leslie MacLeod, the morning of NAWL's closure.

NAWL, a non-profit legal reform organization, has been a key figure in the fight for women's equality in Canada since opening its doors in 1974. It has worked to strengthen sexual assault law, family law and ensure women's equality was included in the Charter of Rights.

But the Harper government does not see the need for that kind of advocacy. So he issued a gag order in the form of funding cuts.

Under SWC's new guidelines, groups who lobby and advocate no longer have access to the public purse to carry out their work. The rules now favour groups that give direct services, including for-profit and religious groups. Groups like REAL Women, who push a patriarchal agenda and seek to limit women's options, are now eligible for funding.

The federal government also nixed the words “women’s equality” from the mandate of Status of Women Canada.

Somehow, we need to get the federal scene back on track. Feel free to voice your concern with a letter to our Prime Minister:

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa

Helpful Links:

NAWL’s website
www.nawl.ca

Coalition for Women’s Equality
<http://www.womensequality.ca/>