

Feminist as Charged

Spring is a little late at *CWS/cf* this year. You probably know that *CWS/cf* was one of three feminist journals to lose all of its operating funds from the Secretary of State Women's Program. We are in good company — *Healthsharing* and *Resources for Feminist Research* and 79 women's centres across the country also had their federal support completely cut. Other national women's organizations like Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CLOW) and the Vancouver Women's Research Centre had their funding sliced by 20 per cent for the second year in a row. Another few years of similar cuts and they'll be in the same position as we are!

Funding to Native groups was also drastically affected. In addition to cuts of between 16 and 60 per cent to Native centres and organizations, the Native Communications Program, which supported aboriginal newspapers and broadcasting, had its entire \$3.4 million budget wiped out. We're in good company, indeed.

Though the government was slow in providing the information on how they'd slashed \$1.6 million from the Women's Program, women's groups across Canada were quick to react — and to fight back. After three months of cross-country phone and letter campaigns, demonstrations and sit-ins, the government, frightened by the strength of women's response, agreed to reinstate funding to the women's centres for one year. A second year's funding is to be dependent on a cost-sharing arrangement between the federal and respective provincial governments.

While we forced the government to think again about pulling our funds out from under us, we have won only a partial victory. Five women's centres have already closed. The others have just one year to find other funding, and we don't place much trust in the feds' cost-sharing fantasies. Moreover, the magazines were not included in the government's rethinking of their earlier decision. The three publications are still pushing for a promised but oft-postponed meeting with Secretary of State Gerry Weiner to find out why. And we continue to work with the other organizations and with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC)

to let everyone know that these are not isolated cuts.

We believe the Tory government has plans to eliminate the funding of all "advocacy" groups, including any women's organizations working to ensure women's equality. This is a dangerous direction for the government that three short years ago adopted the *Fairness in Funding* report, committing itself to supporting equality-seeking women's groups across Canada.

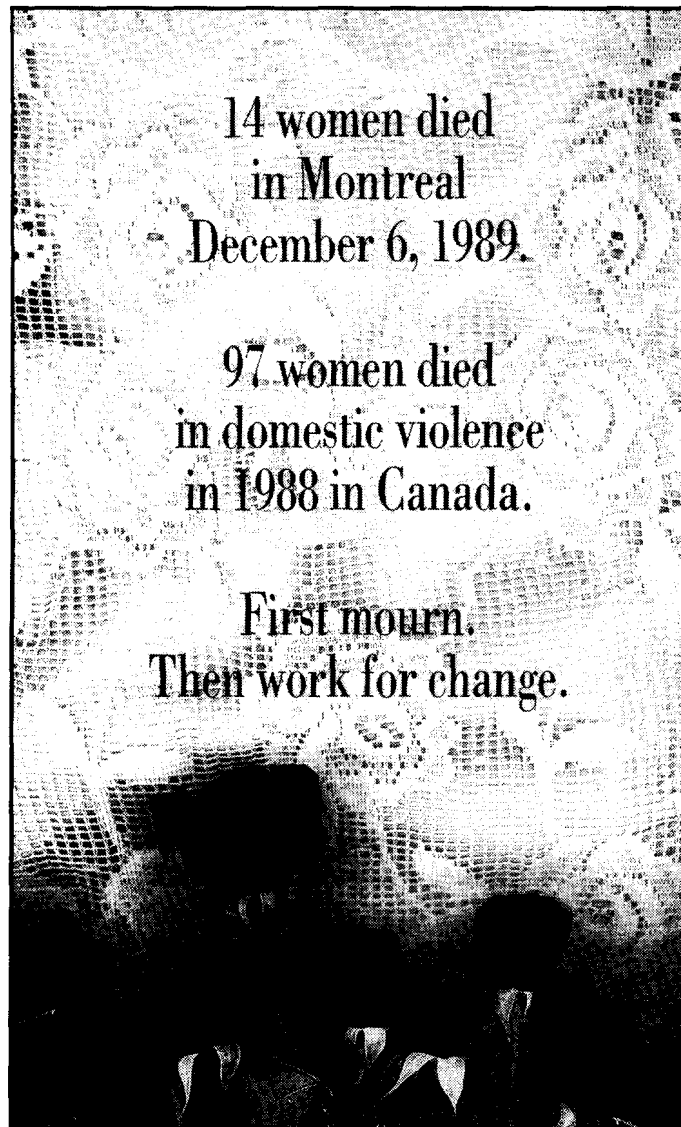
This new government agenda is particularly frightening, coming as it does so soon after the tragic shooting of 14 young women in Montreal in December. And with abortion once again in the Criminal Code, now more than ever, our women's centres are needed to provide the support to women who have nowhere else to turn. More than ever, our research and writing is needed to ensure that the voices of Canadian women — especially those of poor women, women of colour, aboriginal women and disabled women — are not silenced.

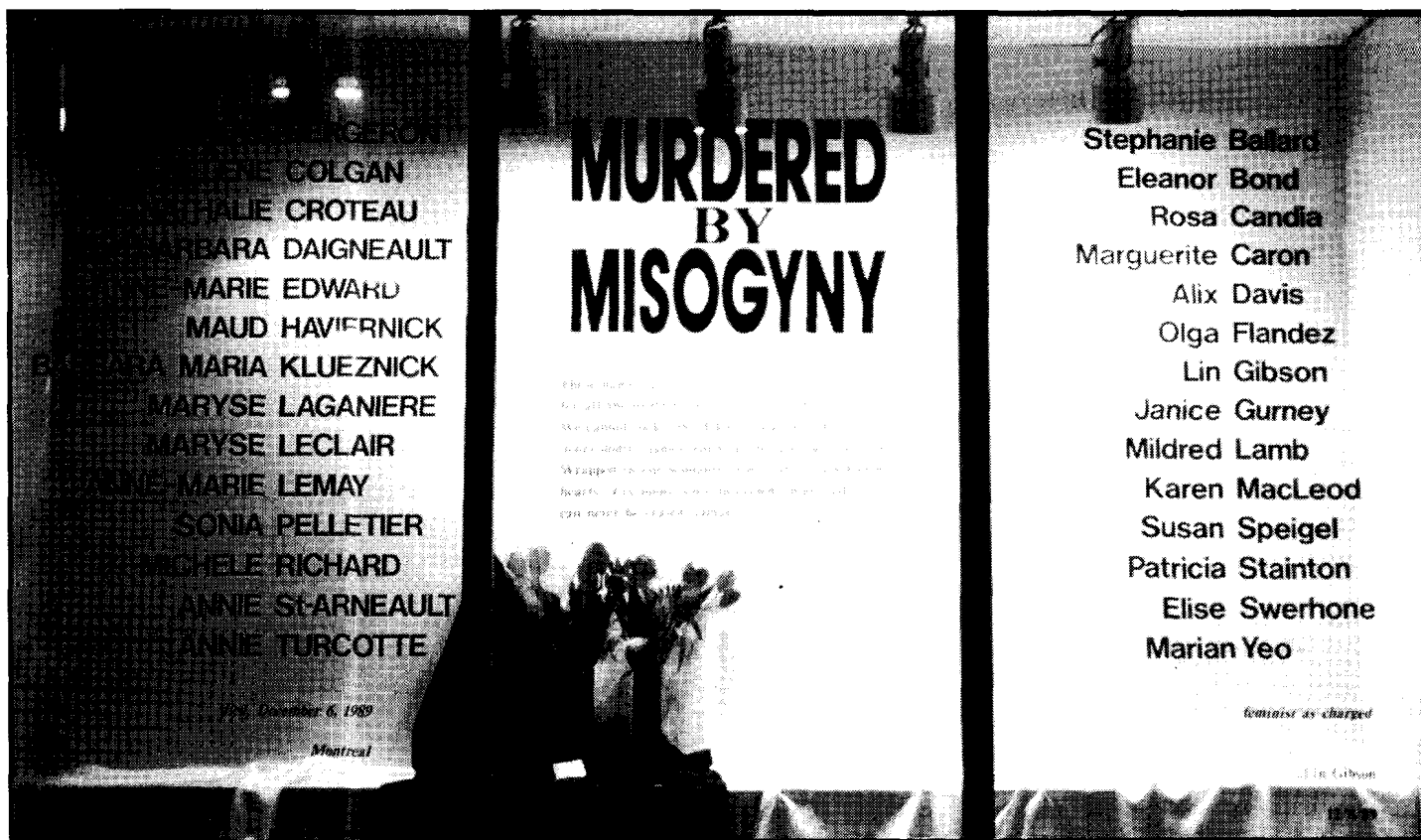
Here at *CWS/cf*, we are investigating other sources of funding, but it is unlikely that we will be able to continue putting out a journal of the same length and quality of production.

We will keep you up to date on our struggle. In the meantime, we ask you to help us in any way you can. Write letters to Secretary of State Gerry Weiner, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Mary Collins and to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, protesting the cuts and the government's clear complicity in the anti-woman backlash taking place in this country. Encourage your friends to subscribe to *CWS/cf* (see enclosed flyer). And, if you can, send us a donation. *CWS/cf* is a registered charitable organization, so any donations are tax deductible.

Thanks for your support — and let's hope we make it through to next spring.

On this and the following page, we are showcasing two feminist artists' responses to the Montreal massacre. Joss MacIennan designed this poster just two days after the massacre. Endorsed by women's organizations across the country, it's available for \$5 from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. Page 4 features a reproduction of Lin Gibson's installation, *Murdered By Misogyny*, which was also completed soon after the tragedy.





Murdered by Misogyny: Ces Noms was a storefront window installation on view during March and April at Page's bookstore in Toronto. The names of 14 living feminists (the artist and 13 friends) were paired with the names of the 14 women massacred in Montreal. Each woman was asked to

remember forever the name of the woman with whom her own name was matched and to allow her name to stand publicly as a feminist ("guilty as charged") alongside the names of the dead.

Lin Gibson

June 1990

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