

Community groups are neither left nor right [CA-NB]^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

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Some are trying hard to create the illusion that there is a bandwagon calling for an end to funding of equality-seeking groups and of government sections such as Status of Women Canada. Others know that "equality-seeking groups" is a term that "people from away" use for the groups that work in our communities to end violence, get people out of poverty or ensure there is quality child care.

Lately, whenever I've come across arguments, such as by conservative columnists, for the abolition of government support for equality-seeking groups, two things have come to mind.

One is, What support? Women's groups in New Brunswick work with little government assistance, with at most occasional project funding. Any financial assistance they have received from Status of Women Canada has been good for New Brunswick communities.

The other thought is, When did it become a liberal - with a capital or a small 'l' - or left-wing thing to support reducing poverty, violence and discrimination?

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Canadian families have a vivid and recent example of attempts to create false divisions that did not serve them well. During the federal election campaign earlier this year, the Conservative and Liberal promises on child care presented two solutions to two different problems. Both were attempts to answer real needs and both solutions are needed.

But somehow, politics and media requiring the appearance of conflict, families were presented as divided into two warring camps, stay-at-home and working-parent families. The reality is different.

A stay-at-home parent today may be working for pay, outside or inside the home, next month. Stay-at-home parents need child care when they are sick, have other responsibilities or want to have their child benefit from the stimulation of child care programs. That is how most women see it, not in the us-versus-them view being projected.

For ordinary New Brunswick families - those that don't judge people or groups based on whether they are "feminist," "right," "left" or indifferent - child care is what you need to raise a family, and it includes supports to stay-at-home and to working parents, home-based services and day care centers.

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Region: Canada^[2]

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gender^[5]

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