

Press Release

August 17, 2005 (Toronto) – Prominent Toronto-Based Human Rights Organization Denounces Michael Thompson's Suggestions Supporting Police Racial Profiling

The Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO) has been a tireless champion of minority and human rights in Toronto for twenty-five years. We demand that Councillor Michael Thompson retract his comments: *"we should encourage the police to stop young black men in the problem areas in order to discern whether or not they have weapons..."* There can be no sound and reasonable explanation as to why citizens of Toronto would tolerate any member of our society to be subject to blatant racial profiling by the police, politicians, or any law enforcers.

CCNCTO President, Lele Truong states, *"the residents of Toronto know that our police are working double and overtime trying to make our city safer; it would be a complete waste of resources asking police to stop Black youth in specific neighbourhoods. Not only is Councilor Thompson's proposal groundless and illegal; it will also serve as a shining example of bias against low-income and minority communities."*

Councillor Thompson's outrageous position will only further cause mistrust amongst racial minority communities and the men and women who serve our city in uniform. This regressive idea from Councilor Thompson is insulting and is rightly being denounced by a wide cross section of diverse communities, police officers and elected officials. The civic rights of young black men or any other segment of our society can not be revoked or denied at the sole and/or systematic discretion of the police. This option is ill-conceived and completely counter-intuitive to long time efforts to improve race relations in our city.

CCNCTO believes that Councillor Thompson's comments would ultimately damage the community/police relationship is being actively fostered and promoted by the current managers of the Toronto Police Services. We all need to work together to make our city and neighbourhoods safe and secure. This can only be achieved with collaborative community and police efforts. Singling out individual members of any ethnic and demographic groups, whether they are from the Black, Arab, Asian or any other communities, will only result in a poisoned environment for everyone. No one will be immune to the wide spread effects of racial profiling, which in our opinion is simply an excuse for lazy policing.

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