

2001:04

DECRIMINALIZATION OF THE NON-MEDICAL USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

Whereas: the failed experience of both alcohol and drug prohibition in the United States provides lessons on what does and does not work in the battle with organized crime; and

Whereas: organized crime in Canada gains enormous profits from the illegal drug trade fostered by the prohibition of illegal drugs; and

Whereas: terrorist groups around the world use the black market profits generated through the prohibition of drugs to further their terrorist aims; and

Whereas: prohibition has not reduced the availability of currently illegal drugs; and

Whereas: the number of people in Canada whose lives have been destroyed or damaged under our current Federal drug laws and policies based on prohibition is unacceptable; and

Whereas: criminalization has not reduced the health risks and other harms for those who use drugs or have drug dependencies; and

Whereas: criminalization has contributed to the violence associated with the trade in currently illegal drugs; and

Whereas: criminalization of drugs in Canada has absorbed vast financial resources, time and personnel, and placed a great strain on the criminal justice system; and

Whereas: drug use and addiction should be treated as health and social issues like other addictions, such as those to nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, prescription drugs rather than as criminal justice issues; therefore be it

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as its policy:

1. the decriminalization of the non-medicinal use of illegal drugs; and
2. the treatment of addiction to drugs as a health and social issue; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

1. examine decriminalized drug control programs that have been shown to work in other countries; and
2. set up a non-criminal regulatory system for dealing with non-medicinal use of drugs as an alternative to control by criminal law; and
3. treat drug use and addiction as health and social issues, rather than as criminal justice issues; and
4. provide the necessary funding for education, addiction prevention and treatment, including measures to address the social and economic conditions that lead to harmful forms of drug use