

85.4 Non-Publication of Names of Accused and/or Arrested Persons

Whereas, It is a time-honoured right of an accused in Canada to be presumed innocent until proven guilty;

Whereas, Our right to know about crime in our society is being manipulated by 'media selection' of crime incidents, arrests

and trials deemed to be most newsworthy, often leaving society with a distorted community crime picture;

Whereas, 'Media selection' adds an additional punishment for those thus chosen through public shaming and pre-judgement,

be they subsequently convicted or acquitted. The stigma affects not only the accused, but the family and loved

ones of the accused, often having devastating impact upon the family members through guilt by association,

ostracism and public condemnation;

Whereas, Canada enjoys an open court system and the need for protection against arbitrary arrest and court procedure is

weak when weighed against the present selection of names by the media, the devastating effects of pre-judgement

by the public of both the guilty and the innocent; and,

Whereas, No freedom is absolute. Every freedom is limited by its consequences for other freedoms; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to amend the Criminal Code

to provide that the name or identity of a person arrested and/or accused of an offence not be published in any

newspaper, magazine or periodical, or broadcast in any manner until a conviction is registered, unless the accused

consents in writing to the name or identity being published or broadcast.