

POLICIES ADOPTED 1985

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(Request for reiteration and update of 1966 Resolution)

85.1 Alcohol Duties and Taxes

Whereas, Canada supported a resolution adopted at the World Health Organization Assembly in 1984, calling upon member nations to formulate a comprehensive national policy to deal with alcohol-related problems;

Whereas, During 1980-81, alcoholic sales in Canada were 5.3 billion dollars, of which 2.5 billion or 46% was tax revenue for the federal and provincial governments; and,

Whereas, The cost of alcohol abuse to Canada and Canadians, while difficult to estimate, has been suggested to be as high as 4 billion dollars each year; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to increase support programs to discourage alcoholic consumption and abuse, as well as programs for treatment of alcoholics; such programs to be financed from duties and excise taxes levied upon manufacturing and distribution of alcoholic beverages; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Provincial Councils of Women to request their respective governments to increase support programs to discourage alcoholic consumption and abuse as well as programs to discourage alcoholic consumption and abuse as well as programs for treatment of alcoholics; such programs to be financed from provincial revenues derived from the sale of alcoholic beverages.

85.2 Expanded Use of Mediation - with Standards for Mediation Professionals

Whereas, There is a growing awareness that the adversarial system is often not the best way to deal with family disputes or marital breakdown;

Whereas, Suffering due to human conflict cannot be dealt with in purely legal terms;

Whereas, Mediation conducted by a well-trained and skilled mediator can lend the support necessary for women to obtain custody and financial support; and,

Whereas, Mediation conducted by a well-trained and skilled mediator tends to result in agreements which have a higher probability of being adhered to than court imposed orders; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to promote the use of mediation as an alternative to court litigation for the settling of family disputes, to develop standards for the training and accreditation of mediation professionals and the establishment of a resource of experts for mediation and conciliation purposes; be it further,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective governments to develop standards for the profession of mediation and the use of the services of such professionals as an alternative to court litigation.

85.3 Standardization and Reduction in Number of Package Sizes

Whereas, Metric package sizes are not always in easily comparable multiples;

Whereas, The direct conversion of the Imperial units into Metric units make price comparisons extremely difficult;

Whereas, This simplification and standardization of sizes in the retail outlets has been shown to be feasible with some products; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada , and in particular the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, to require industry -

1. To move as quickly as possible toward standard, easily comparable Metric sizes; and,
2. To reduce the number of allowable package sizes for each product.

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.

85.5 Safe Drinking Water

Whereas, Ideally, synthetic organics should not be present in finished drinking water;

Whereas, There are increasing numbers of such chemicals and trace in-organics appearing in drinking water;

Whereas, Water quality purification facilities are not designed to cope with this situation;

Whereas, The effects of these new contaminants on human health and the environment are unknown;

Whereas, Existing drinking water quality guidelines are not being enforced; and,

Whereas, There is a need for well-researched universal guidelines for safe drinking water across Canada; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada:

1. To enact a Safe Drinking Water Act, and as far as its jurisdiction extends, encourage the provinces in their efforts to ensure safe drinking water standards in all areas of Canada;
2. To encourage the use of improved water purification plant technologies; and,
3. To protect water sources by allocating more resources to prevent contamination of water supplies, with particular attention to the recycling and reduction of wastes; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective governments to accept federal guidelines and adopt legislation on drinking water quality standards.

85.6 National River Basin Management Policy

Whereas, Canada, with 1% of the world's population, possesses 9% of the world's fresh water supply and the largest lake area of any country in the world and its great abundance of fresh water may be interpreted as excess;

Whereas, Large-scale developments such as impoundments and inter-basin transfers, as well as many in-stream and consumptive uses of water, have been carried out within Canada's river systems with a local, regional or single interest purpose;

Whereas, There is often inadequate pre-project environmental impact assessment and, in any case, our ability to predict accurately the impacts of such large-scale developments is not highly developed;

Whereas, River basins are functional hydrological and geomorphic wholes which support and interact intimately with the complex biological systems of the watersheds, streams, rivers and lakes;

Whereas, The freshwater runoff from the land impinges on the coastal zone at many major and minor estuaries and influences processes in the coastal zone generally; and,

Whereas, All of Canada's five river basins extend beyond the boundaries of any province or territory; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada:

1. To establish a national river basin management policy in cooperation with the provinces and territories:
 - (a) To plan and coordinate further development and modification of Canada's major river systems to attempt to ensure that compatible and ecologically-sound uses are made of the water; and,
 - (b) To maintain as wide a range of future options for development as possible, considering not only surface waters by associated ground waters, the systems from head waters to estuaries and receiving coastal waters and the requirement for coordinating land use within watersheds with water use;
2. To increase funding to existing national river basin research centres, and to establish, where necessary, additional such centres:
 - (a) For collating existing knowledge on large-scale aspects of river basin hydrology, geochemistry and ecology, and the effects of developments on these;
 - (b) For initiating research to fill gaps in knowledge where they are identified; and,
 - (c) For providing strong guidelines to administrators and developers of river basins.
3. To prohibit the construction of structures which would permit the diversion of inter-basin transfer of water to a foreign country and on any agreements between Canada and foreign governments in which Canada would agree to supply water to foreign nations.

85.7 Safe Storage and Disposal of Hazardous Products

Whereas, Regulations and implementation of those regulations for the protection of the environment and the population from hazardous products during storage and disposal, are presently inadequate; and,

Whereas, In emergency situations such as fire, leaking containers or accidental spills, hazardous products present an additional and particular danger; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to enact and enforce legislation in areas under its jurisdiction, which would ensure safe storage and disposal of hazardous products by requiring:

- (a) That all industries, institutions and agencies using, or having charge of such materials, keep a complete inventory, such inventories to be open to investigation by control authorities at any time;
- (b) That all hazardous substances, wherever they are, be listed as on the National Code and all persons having control over such substances, or who might have cause to be present in emergency situations, be familiar with the methodology outlined by the Code;
- (c) That the generic name and elemental composition be clearly marked on the outside of all containers, and warnings be posted;
- (d) That specially designed, publicly acceptable Waste Disposal Sites be selected for this purpose, such sites to be strictly controlled and have a public representation on their Board of Management; and,
- (e) That where at all feasible, recycling should be done to greatly reduce the need for disposal of industrial wastes; and be it further,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincial Councils of Women and Local Councils of Women to urge their respective provincial governments to enact and enforce legislation which would accomplish those aims outlined in the above 'Resolved' clause.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

85.8EM Deregulation of Telephone Industry

Whereas, An application has been made to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) by CN/CP which seeks permission to provide long distance service; and,

Whereas, Granting of such permission will mean deregulation of the telephone industry as it now exists; and,

- Whereas,** The long distance market, where the larger profits are made, traditionally has provided subsidies to the non-profit area (i.e. local service, installations and repairs). This is known as cross-subsidization similar to other areas of public service like the Post Office; and,
- Whereas,** Granting permission to CN/CP to go into competition with present telephone companies will relieve such companies of the burden of subsidizing non-profit service out of their profits; and,
- Whereas,** With their profits substantially reduced, the existing companies will have no alternative but to raise monthly rates and installation, repairs and other rates; and,
- Whereas,** Those most affected will be seniors, particularly those housebound, lower income families and especially volunteer organizations, many of whom exist through the use of the telephone; and,
- Whereas,** The ever-increasing postal rates necessitate even greater dependence on the telephone for volunteer organizations; therefore, be it,
- RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada not to deregulate the telephone industry.

85.9EM Support of Radio Canada International

- Whereas,** All services under the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation have suffered recent cutbacks in funding; and,
- Whereas,** Radio Canada International was formed to be our window on the world; and,
- Whereas,** Radio Canada International has brought a message of good will from Canada to many parts of the world which do not have free access to the world media; and,
- Whereas,** Few Canadians realize the importance of Radio Canada International as an agent for Canada in the world, which advertises our way of life, our products and our expertise in such areas of communications; therefore be it,
- RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to ensure that Radio Canada International is able:
1. To maintain services to those countries which have little free access to the world media; and,
 2. To program for and to transmit effectively to new audiences in such countries as those of the Pacific Rim.

85.10EM Canadian Participation in the Development of 'Star Wars' Technology

- Whereas,** Canada is known to be a peace loving and peace keeping country through its political actions as well as its peace keeping efforts for the United Nations; and,
- Whereas,** The 'Star Wars' plan will add alarmingly to the instability of world peace; and,
- Whereas,** Enormous amounts of money will be required to develop what is described by many scientists as impossible technology; and,
- Whereas,** This will add immensely to the world armament costs, which, already exceed \$800 billion per year; and,
- Whereas,** This is money which could well be used to provide for basic needs such as food, shelter, clean water for third world countries, a cause to which Canada is firmly committed; therefore be it,
- RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to refrain from participating in the development of 'Star Wars' technology.

85.11EM Budget Cuts to Environmental and Wildlife Research Program

- Whereas,** Our ecosystem sustains all life and the quality of that life; and,
- Whereas,** The future of our ecosystem requires that society develop an understanding of the chemical and physical properties interacting on, and with our wildlife and environment; and,
- Whereas,** \$46-million has been cut from the budget of Environment Canada which has resulted in the loss of important scientific research programs; and,
- Whereas,** Scientists have subsequently stated that these programs are necessary to understand the links between chemicals in the environment and potential health effects on the human organism; and,
- Whereas,** Total reinstatement is vital in order to determine the risk to human health associated with the hundreds of chemicals

identified in the Great Lakes; and,

Whereas, The levels of toxic chemicals also serve to act as a barometer of the success of pollution control programs; therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

1. Reinststate, in their entirety:
 - a) The Herring Gull Contaminants Monitoring Program;
 - b) The Effects of Agricultural Pesticides on Prairie Wetlands and Water Fowl;
 - c) The Porcupine Caribou Head Study;
2. Make no further cuts to the budgets of environmental research programs.
3. Expand the public consultation program through Environment Canada, so that in the future the government will have a vehicle in place to accurately judge public concerns and expectations about environmentally sensitive issues.

85.12EM Amendment to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

Whereas, Resolutions of the National Council of Women of Canada with respect to the Canadian Penal System and the Humanitarian Provisions of the Helsinki Final Agreement clearly indicate the Council's concern for the protection of human rights and the humanization of criminal justice; and,

Whereas, The dignity of the human person has come to be recognized as a universal ideal and as the basis of human rights; and,

Whereas, This basic principle is not included in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; and,

Whereas, The full implementation of the Rules may be impeded by a lack of expression of this basic principle; and,

Whereas, The need for formulation of additional standards and norms has been recognized and is an agenda topic at the Seventh Congress on the Prevention of Crime and The Treatment of Prisoners; and,

Whereas, Delegations from the Government of Canada and the International Council of Women will attend the Seventh Congress; be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada and the International Council of Women to support an amendment to Part I of the Rules of General Application of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners through addition of the following Basic Principle:

- 6(3) Every person shall be regarded as having an intrinsic dignity and value in him/her self, regardless of his/her condition and entirely apart from any institutional or social objectives he/she may serve.
- 6(4) Penal institutions shall have as one of their essential purposes, at least in importance to any other purpose, the development of the individual human person.

85.13EM Amendment to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

RECOGNIZING The long-standing concern of the International Council of Women and its National Councils with the humanization of criminal justice and the protection of human rights,

RECALLING That thirty years have passes since the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders adopted the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,

AWARE That changes have taken place in correctional policy and practice since the Rules were first adopted,

BELIEVING That full implementation of the Rules is being impeded by a lack of expression of certain basic principles, the absence of which weakens the under-lying rationale of the Rules and gives rise to divergence of interpretation,

NOTING That, since the Rules were adopted in 1955, other United Nations Instruments for the protection of Human Rights have been given expression in concepts not fully reflected in the Rules,

DESIRING To express the principles that have been missing from the Rules,

DESIRING ALSO To emphasize the balance that should be maintained, in the administration of prisons, between the protecting of society and the equally fundamental aim of providing for the well-being and development of the individual prisoner as a human person,

RECOMMENDS To the International Council of Women support of an amendment to Part I of the Rules of General

Application of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, through the addition of the following Basic Principle:

- 6(3) Every person shall be regarded as having an intrinsic dignity and value in him/her self, regardless of his/her condition and entirely apart from any institutional or social objectives he/she may serve.
- 6(4) Penal institutions shall have, as one of their essential purposes, at least equal in importance to any other purpose, the development of the individual human purpose.

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION FORWARDED TO THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOLLOWING THE 1985 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA

85.14EM Inter-State Adoptions
(Request for reiteration and update of 1966 Resolution)

RECALLING that since the First World War many sad cases have arisen and are still arising from the difference between national laws governing inter-state adoptions.

RECALLING that a draft International Convention on the inter-state adoption of children was drawn up in 1964 by the Conference of International Private Law in The Hague, but that no further action has been taken as regards this draft.

The ICW REQUESTS its affiliated Councils to use their influence with their respective governments in order that an instrument may be drawn up on the inter-state adoption of children, which would protect these children.