

## **POLICIES ADOPTED 1984**

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### **84.1 Reduction of Lead Levels in the Environment**

**Whereas,** During the past year the current and past federal Environment Ministers have indicated a concern with the level of lead in gasoline and its effect on the environment; and,

**Whereas,** Many national organizations concerned with child health feel children particularly are at risk due to environmental lead levels (not to downgrade the risk to humans generally); be it,

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

1. To hasten its program in lowering the lead levels with a view to completely phasing out lead in gasoline, and,
2. To encourage the use of unleaded gasoline by revising the tax structure on gasoline to eliminate the price differential between leaded and unleaded gasoline; and,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincial Councils of Women to request their respective provincial governments to encourage the use of unleaded gasoline by revising the tax structure to eliminate the price differential between leaded and unleaded gasoline.

### **84.2 Assistance for Canada's Universities**

**Whereas,** Uncertainty about the roles of the Provincial and Federal Governments in the financing of Canada's universities; and,

**Whereas,** These institutions are weakened by declines in financial support by governments and other sources, and are hampered in the ability to make long-range plans; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to resolve the climate of uncertainty about federal-provincial roles by reaching an agreement with Provincial Governments on an adequate and stable system of support for the provinces' post-secondary institutions; and be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective governments to reach an agreement with the Government of Canada on an adequate and stable system of support for the provinces' university/universities.

### **84.3 Fire Safety**

**Whereas,** Synthetic fabrics and foams used in furniture construction and transportation vehicles may ignite and burn easily and may emit toxic fumes such as hydrogen cyanide, hydrogen chloride and carbon monoxide which can cause deaths from asphyxiation in relatively small fires; and,

**Whereas,** There is a need to alert the general public about potential fire hazards; and,

**Whereas,** Flammability standards have been established for mattress construction under the Federal Hazards Products Act; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to require the National Research Council to bring forward an adequately tested replacement for plastic foams and other synthetic materials used in home furnishings and transportation vehicles; and be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to undertake a program to educate the public about the dangers of careless smoking and the hazards involved in the use of polyurethane and other synthetic materials in home furnishings.

#### **84.4 Amendment Criminal Records Act**

**Whereas,** The Criminal Code, s.662.1 provides that when it is in the best interest of the accused and is not contrary to the public interest, a person found guilty of a criminal offence may be given an absolute or conditional discharge and if discharged shall be deemed not to have been convicted of that offence; and,

**Whereas,** The intent of the discharge is to allow the court to relieve a person, in appropriate circumstances, from the injurious consequences of a criminal record; and,

**Whereas,** The Criminal Records Act, s.2(2) treats absolute and conditional discharges in the same manner as a conviction, thus leaving the offender with a criminal record without having been convicted; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to amend the Criminal Records Act by deleting s.2(2), which makes its provisions applicable to absolute and conditional discharges, and to enact appropriate legislation to provide that absolute or conditional discharges are not to be included in a criminal record.

#### **84.5 Appraisal Military Strength**

**Whereas,** The people of Canada desire peace for their country and in the present world situation, it would appear that peace can only be attained through security made possible through commitment to appropriate and adequate military preparedness; and,

**Whereas,** The threats posed to Canada's security have increased substantially since Canada's White Paper on military matters, entitled "Defence in the 70s", was published in 1971; and,

**Whereas,** The most current first and second reports of the Special Senate Sub-Committee on National Defence reveal that Canada now lacks even the minimum military strength necessary to meet its peacetime obligations, satisfy its alliance commitments, or allow its men and women in uniform to carry out wartime tasks with some reasonable prospects; and,

**Whereas,** The already established objections of the military do not have as a first priority the maintenance of a properly equipped military force with a supporting defence industry; be it,

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

1. To bring forward a new policy or statement of purpose and well-defined objectives for its military forces; and,
2. To include in the new policy a commitment to ensure that the manpower and material required for Canada's peacetime obligations, alliance commitments and the carrying out of military tasks, be provided according to a stated, definite timetable.

#### **84.6 Plant Breeder's Rights Legislation**

**Whereas,** The Government of Canada has stated (Hansard 6/2/84) its support of the principle of free exchange and access to plant genetic resources; and,

**Whereas,** The Government of Canada is not signatory to the Resolution adopted at the November 1983 Conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for an undertaking on the free exchange of plant genetic resources; and,

**Whereas,** The Government of Canada has stated (Hansard 16/12/83) that it believes the solution to the perceived problem for which the Resolution was presented should come be strengthening existing systems, not striking out in new and uncertain directions; and,

**Whereas,** Plant Breeders Rights Legislation has been tabled in the House; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Government of Canada to continue its present policy regulating plant breeding under the mechanism of Seed Canada (SECAN) rather than through the enactment of

Plant Breeders Rights Legislation.

#### **84.7 United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization Program (FAO)**

**Whereas,** Human survival is dependent on the preservation of a diverse genetic base on which seed breeding rests and the crucial genetic base of the world's food supply; the seed of the earth is fast disappearing; and

**Whereas,** There is growing concern about the erosion of genetic materials as evidenced by the resolution adopted at the November 1983 Conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to provide for an undertaking on the free exchange of plant genetic resources; and,

**Whereas,** The Government of Canada, while not a signatory to the FAO Resolution, has stated its support of the principle of free exchange and access to plant genetic resources and is examining to what extent, if necessary, it could implement the principles contained in the FAO program; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada indicate to the Government of Canada endorsement of the concept of the world's plant genetic resources being a common heritage to all humanity; and further,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to implement the principles contained in the FAO program to provide for an undertaking on the free exchange of plant genetic resources.

#### **84.8 Pension Plan Period of Exclusion**

**Whereas,** All participants in the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan may exclude years of low and zero earnings up to a total of 15 percent of the years of participation, in the calculation of pension benefits; and,

**Whereas,** The Canada/Quebec pension Plan includes provisions whereby a parent who remains in the home with a child under the age of seven years may exclude those years in the calculation of pension benefits; and,

**Whereas,** These exclusions minimize the penalty in pension benefits for periods of illness, unemployment and child-rearing; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to institute a cost-benefit analysis of an increase of the period of exclusion of low and zero earnings from the contribution records of Canada/Quebec Pension Plan participants from 15 percent to 30 percent in order to further minimize loss in pension benefits because of illness, unemployment and child-rearing.

#### **84.9 International Year of the Family**

**Whereas,** The United Nations has established International Women's Year, the International Year of the Child, and in 1985 the International Year of the Youth will take place; and,

**Whereas,** National Councils of Women around the world have focussed their attention not only on women and children but on the family as well; be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to promote an International Year of the Family through their delegations at the United Nations; and be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the International Council of Women to promote an International Year of the Family at the United Nations.

#### **84.10 Claiming Refugee Status in Canada**

**Whereas,** The Government of Canada agreed to accept world refugees as defined by the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951; and,

**Whereas,** Persons from any country can enter Canada and apply for Convention Refugee Status: each of these applications must be adjudicated and added to the existing backlog; and,

**Whereas,** Unfavourable decisions may be appealed and the final determination delayed for an extended period of time; be it,

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

1. Institute a universal visa requirement with the exception of citizens of the United States;
2. Ensure that persons in Canada under Visitors Visas or Student Visas can only claim Convention Refugee Status if the situation in their countries of origin has changed during their stay in Canada to such an extent that there are compelling reasons to expect persecution if they return to their country;
3. Eliminate the Refugee Status Advisory Committee and enlarge the Immigration Appeal Board to give an impartial and public hearing to persons who are at present in Canada and have claimed Convention

## EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS

### 84.11EM South Moresby

**RESOLVED,** That the PCW BC and NCWC cooperate to urge the Provincial Government and Federal Government to work together to have South Moresby set aside as a combination of National Marine Park/National and Provincial Parks in time for Parks Canada's Centennial Celebration in 1985.

### 84.12EM Drunk Driving

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women request the Government of Canada to immediately amend the Criminal Code to increase penalties for drunk driving by making the driver responsible for any resulting alcohol-related offences.

### 84.13EM Maintenance/Alimony Defaulted Payments

**RESOLVED,** That the NCWC request the Government of Canada:

- (1) To immediately enact the proposed National Registry of defaulting divorced persons legislation; and,
- (2) to set up a method of diverting any federal funds accruing to the defaulting party so that those funds might become available under the court order or agreement; and,

**RESOLVED,** That the NCWC request the Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective governments to put in place:

- (1) Legislation to set up a collection of maintenance or alimony facility when default of payment occurs, coordinated by the Justice Department of the Government of Canada;
- (2) Reciprocal agreements re default with all other jurisdictions in which the defaulter might reside.