

While customs officials are turning back greater amounts of the pornographic material which flows into Canada from the United States, direct citizen involvement has been the key factor in effecting improvements with respect to the display of pornographic material."

EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS GUELPH AREA

Requesting Ontario Government to reconsider the decision to close hospitals.

Hon. Frank Miller

As I am sure you are aware, the costs of health care in Ontario have been escalating at an ever-increasing rate. To contain these cost increases, the Ministry has embarked on a program of constraint in spending. It is, however, our intention to cause hardship to either users or providers of health care in the province, and we are ensuring that the utmost co-operation of all concerned is achieved. Providing high quality health care services with the financial resources we have available to us is an increasingly difficult task to which much thought must be given."

HAMILTON AREA

Requesting the Ontario Government to enact legislation to make it mandatory, within a reasonable length of time, for companies responsible for dumping industrial waste to find safer and more satisfactory methods of treating and disposing in a manner that can be guaranteed safe.

Hon. Geo Kerr

Cambrian Disposals Ltd.

As you are no doubt aware, the company which is proposing to construct the disposal well has withdrawn its application and the project will, therefore, not proceed.

It is unfortunate that the Environmental Hearing cannot be held, as I am confident that the evidence presented at the Hearing would have allayed the fears and concerns shared by many people about the cost of deep well waste disposal."

HASTINGS NORTH DISTRICT

Because of the development of nuclear energy, concern was expressed about the storage of waste, the detrimental effects of radiation on future generations and the lack of development of alternative sources—the Governments of Ontario and Canada were requested to create an educational program to acquaint the public with the hazards, benefits of nuclear.

The Atomic Energy of Canada and the Minister of Energy, the Hon. James Taylor, both were sent copies of this resolution, and both have indicated just how intensively they are attempting to cope with this problem.

There is one point in the resolution, however, that I must take issue with—namely, the assertion that the Ontario Government is "neglecting the development of alternative sources such as renewable resources and the conservation of energy."

I can assure you that the Ministry of Energy—through existing demonstration projects and continued research—is already pursuing the development of alternate energy sources, such as solar heating and the

economic utilization of methanol as an alternative fuel.

Resource Material available—Nuclear Power in Ontario; Ontario's Energy Future; Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning;—ask your member of parliament for these. Nuclear Power in Canada available from Canadian Nuclear Association, 65 Queen W, Toronto, M5H 2M5.

Queensborough Branch—Hastings North that FW10 opposed the legislation making the possession of Marijuana no longer a criminal offence. Minister of Health and Welfare.

Hon. Monique Begin

The Government sponsored the introduction of cannabis (marijuana and hashish) legislation in the Senate on November 26, 1974. This bill (known as Bill S-19) was designed to remove cannabis from the Narcotic Control Act and to place its control under the Food and Drugs Act.

Bill S-19 would have reduced the maximum penalties for cannabis offences, but only to the extent that these were in excess of the vast majority of sentences being handed down by the courts. The bill would not have removed criminal penalties for unauthorized cannabis possession. On the contrary, cannabis users found in possession of the drug would have continued to be subject to arrest and prosecution, as under the Narcotic Control Act.

Bill S-19 was passed by the Senate on June 18, 1975 and received first reading in the House of Commons on June 19, 1975. However, owing to a number of other pressing matters the House was unable to devote further attention to the bill before the end of the 1974-76 Session of the Thirtieth Parliament. Thus, cannabis remains subject today to the criminal procedures and penalties under the Narcotic Control Act.

The Government has expressed its opposition to the legalization of cannabis production and distribution on a number of occasions. Such an approach would signal approval or encouragement of cannabis use and is, thus, considered an inappropriate alternative to current legislative policy in this respect.

While the Government remains convinced that there are individual and public health risks associated with cannabis, it has to acknowledge that there is also a growing concern over the personal and social impact of penal laws intended to discourage its use. There were, for example, over 125,000 convictions for simple possession of cannabis between 1970 and 1976, half of which involved persons under the age of 21.

The Government's mandate to protect the health of Canadians from hazardous substances must be tempered by its awareness of the consequences of preventive measures enacted for that purpose. It is with this object in mind, that is, to strike the appropriate legislative balance between concerns over the health risks of cannabis and concerns over the impact of penal laws intended to discourage its use, that officials of this Department, the Department of Justice and the Ministry of the Solicitor General are reviewing the provisions of Bill S-19. At the same time, however, the Government does not intend to waver in its commitment to a policy of discouragement of cannabis use or to fail to remind Canadians of the physical and psychological hazards of this drug.