

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

8TH ASSEMBLY, 62ND SESSION

TABLED DOCUMENT NO. 9-62

TABLED ON May 11, 1977

Tabled Document No. 9-62
Tabled ~~May-11-77~~ 77

SUMMARY OF MAJOR
RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM THE REPORT
TO TERRITORIAL
COUNCIL
OF THE
ALCOHOL AND DRUG
CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL
FOR
THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MAY 1977

The following material contains the major recommendations to Territorial Council from the Alcohol and Drug Co-ordinating Council.

Recommendations

1. Social Policy Committee report:

The A.D.C.C. for the N.W.T. recommends to Territorial Council serious consideration and adoption of the following statement in order that legislation and policy establish a consistency in the development of behavioral standards. We would further suggest that it may also facilitate some answers to the problems created by the availability of alcohol.

If this statement is not accepted we strongly recommend to Territorial Council that a consistent philosophy be adopted.

Philosophy

The Co-ordinating Council's philosophy on alcohol may be summed up as follows:

- that alcohol (C_2H_5OH) is a drug of the sedative hypnotic and psychoactive type - a Central Nervous System depressant of limited medical value;
- the major benefits of alcohol centre around social values held by various elements of society at large, values which generally related to social and/or religious customs, traditions, or superstitions;
- alcohol is not a commodity of basic societal need;
- misused (by self-infliction) or uncontrolled by legislation will cause varying degrees of social disruption, alcohol poisoning and serious health problems of epidemic proportions;
- the availability/accessibility of alcohol by an individual in society is a personal privilege and not a personal right;
- society has a right and a responsibility to define the limits of the privilege, sanction its use and, indeed, punish those who abuse their privilege by removing the individual's privilege and by other means;
- society has the right and responsibility to investigate factors concerning the etiology of alcohol abuse.

Objectives

1. The Liquor Ordinance of the Government of the Northwest Territories should embody and reflect its primary concern for the health, economic and social well-being of the people resident in the Northwest Territories.
2. The Government of the N.W.T. by making alcohol available does not agree with, nor condone, the misuse of alcohol, drunkenness or the associated problems and shares the attitude of the Minister of National Health and Welfare;* (i.e. because these conditions are, in fact, self-inflicted by individuals and are therefore preventable, policies and programs of the Government shall reflect this concept as a criterion of eligibility/participation).
3. The Government of the N.W.T. should continue to define the scope and limits of the privilege to drink alcohol; i.e. legislation should clearly define the Government's policies on control, restriction, prohibition, enforcement, sale, manufacturing, and transportation of alcohol; and provide for appropriate sanctions to be imposed on those abusing the privilege.
4. The Government of the N.W.T. recognizes that where severe legislative restrictions are applied consideration for adequate compensation to businesses who have made investments related to the sale of alcohol should apply.

Preventive Measures

The following are specific items discussed by the A.D.C.C. and are put forward to Council as policy items for consideration.

- a) Pricing: The present pricing policy for alcohol is inconsistent relative to the cost of local basic commodities. It is unfair in that several communities on the N.W.T. highway system are, in fact, paying the bulk of the cost of the transportation while others are not.

* New perspectives on the Health of Canadians, the Honourable Marc Lalond, Minister of National Health and Welfare.

The price of alcohol should reflect the concept of encouraging people to drink in controlled environments, therefore, it would be wise to reconsider the present pricing policy. Ideally the price to each community, regardless of circumstances, should reflect the real cost plus the standard markup. It is not suggested the prices in the southern N.W.T. outlets should be lowered.

Consideration should be given to reviewing the present wholesale price to licensed outlets with a view to allowing wider margins and encouraging operators to upgrade their standards of operation. Pricing policy should be structured so as to encourage alcohol consumption in controlled environments rather than uncontrolled. Maintenance of standards should be mandatory with severe penalties set by regulation for offenders.

Further, serious consideration should be given to increasing the price differential between regular and low alcohol content products at all outlets. Policy should reflect the principle of maintaining the price of this commodity at the luxury level.

b) Enforcement

Enforcement, as a medium of prevention, has a significant and immediate effect on behavior if the liability or likelihood of getting caught is readily apparent.

Throughout the N.W.T. this is not necessarily the case and the Co-ordinating Council suspects that the problem is in the application of penalties, which reflects the seriousness of intent on the part of Territorial Council. The Alcohol and Drug Co-ordinating Council suggests that the various penalties throughout the Liquor Ordinance be reviewed and increased where necessary. Further, Territorial Council should insist that the Liquor Ordinance be enforced by the appropriate authorities to increase the likelihood of getting caught and facilitate rapid response by the judiciary against offenders.

c) Quality, Standards and Style of Outlets

Regulating measures should be reviewed on these items as they have a measurable effect on consumption patterns. For instance a self-serve liquor store increases impulse buying; in licensed premises quality and style of decor within outlets

have an effect on patrons and their behaviour.

The number of controlled outlets has an effect in the overall consumption pattern which determines the level of problems encountered.

The problems created by liquor stores and uncontrolled bootlegging operations could perhaps be prevented by developing a controlled social facility in a given community through legitimate local authority.

d) Community Standards

In addition to the Community Resource Development Grants Program, further consideration should be given to encouraging the development of behavior standards set by the Community. Behavioral standards are reflected by the judiciary in the manner of prescribing penalties. These penalties have a significant effect in determining the criteria for acceptable behaviour.

e) Community Sanctions

Consistent with our philosophy, community sanctions should be aimed at the individual who abuses privileges rather than at the community as a whole. However, where the quality of life of a community is seriously affected, individuals who drink but do not suffer have a responsibility with regard to the effects of liquor availability.

Community sanctions available include prohibition, interdiction, rationing, etc. These tools should be used as part of the process of a community being able to address the essential issues of if, how or why the community wishes to have alcohol eventually available. The use of the sanction of prohibition should not be viewed as an answer or final solution. Rather, communities should use the respite provided by the imposition of such a sanction to seriously address the why and how of alcohol availability. Interested individuals and groups can receive funds to finance research projects through the Co-ordinating Council to aid in addressing this issue.

Definitions

a) Prevent:

To keep from occurring; to hinder or stop from doing something; to act ahead of; to anticipate; to precede; to interpose a hinderance.

b) Prevention:

Noting or pertaining to prevention of disease; serving to prevent or hinder; preventive medicine, a preventive agent or measure.

c) Concept of Prevention:

Defined as it applies to alcohol and drug problems. "Anything that reduces likelihood that alcohol and drug problems will develop".

d) Primary Prevention:

The adoption of drinking or non-drinking patterns that do not lead to problems.

e) Secondary Prevention:

The identification and modification of high risk drinking patterns before problems arise.

f) Tertiary Prevention:

Modification of high risk drinking patterns before further problems occur or limiting disabilities.

g) Philosophy:

(For this purpose) A system or principles for guidance to practical affairs.

h) Alcohol:

C_2H_5OH ethyl alcohol a drug of the sedative hypnotic and psychoactive type. A Central Nervous System depressant of limited medical value.

i) Prohibition:

The Co-ordinating Council supports the right of a community to decide for such option but do not consider blanket prohibition in the Territorial sense to be practicable.

2. Review the Liquor Ordinance

In keeping with the initial recommendation presented in the Co-ordinating Councils first Report to Territorial Council, the membership feels quite strongly that a complete review and revision of the Liquor Ordinance is in order. Areas of specific concern are as follows:

- a) the advisability of having self-service liquor stores.
- b) a seeming lack of concern with regard to making licensed premises more conducive to moderation in drinking by encouraging a wider variety of foods, activities involving psychomotor co-ordination, stand-up drinking areas and encouraging patrons to procure their own drinks at the bar rather than having table service.
- c) the price of alcohol beverages has not as yet been increased to the price level of a luxury commodity. Pricing, in particular, needs to be reviewed with a view to emphasize having prices relate to alcohol content level (i.e. the higher the alcohol content the higher the price).
- d) Because of problems caused by alcohol, it seems inappropriate that the authorities concerned should permit liquor advertising which, in effect, encourages and reinforces the deviant drinking patterns which lead to these problems.
- e) The agency responsible for supervising the promotional activities of brewers, distillers and vintners should establish guidelines with the aim of controlling such activities.

3. Membership Structure of the Co-ordinating Council

Members of the Co-ordinating Council feel strongly that the following motion passed at its March 1977 meeting should be endorsed and approved by Territorial Council:

"Moved that agency representation on the Alcohol and Drug Co-ordinating Council be altered to include the following representatives:

- 4 Inuit members: one appointed by each Regional Inuit Association
- 3 Metis members: appointed by the Metis Association
- 3 Indian members: appointed by Indian Brotherhood
- 2 Members at large: nominated by a Nominating Committee of the Co-ordinating Council
- 1 Youth Association member
- 1 Member from Alcoholics Anonymous
- 1 Chamber of Commerce member
- 1 R.C.M. Police member

1 Liquor Control Board member

1 Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
member

1 Health and Welfare Canada member

1 Non-Medical Use of Drugs member

INUKTITUK TRANSLATION
OF SOCIAL POLICY
COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

