

Ten Facts All Canadians Need To Know About Cannabis



1. In 2002 the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drug Use studied the cannabis issue extensively. Their unanimous recommendation was that cannabis be legalized in a regulatory framework similar to alcohol.

The Senate report online: www.SenateReport.ca

2. The decision to criminalize cannabis was made "without any apparent scientific basis nor even any real sense of social urgency."

- *Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, 2002. P. 274*

3. "Scientific evidence overwhelmingly indicates that cannabis is substantially less harmful than alcohol and should be treated not as a criminal issue but as a social and public health issue."

- *Senator Pierre Claude Nolin, Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs.*

4. "The continued prohibition of cannabis jeopardizes the health and well-being of Canadians much more than does the substance itself." - *Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, 2002. Summary P. 45*

5. Cannabis has NOT been decriminalized or legalized in Canada.

Canada's **Le Dain Commission** recommended the decriminalization of cannabis back in 1972! Over 30 years later and we're still only talking about it.

6. The so-called "decriminalization" bill proposed by the Liberal government was an "alternative penalties" bill.

Under this bill, possession of small amounts of cannabis would remain illegal, but a fine would be rendered instead of a criminal charges being laid. In addition, the bill proposed to double maximum penalties for growing cannabis.

The core flaw of the bill was that it was crafted without acknowledging the dynamics of the black market and the considerable harms caused by the policy of prohibition. The bill would have actually made matters worse with its contradictory and confused approach.

7. Legalizing and regulating the production and sale of cannabis does NOT send the "wrong message."

The government dismisses the possibility of legalizing cannabis saying it would increase use by sending the message that cannabis use is OK.

The policy of cannabis prohibition has been shown to have no impact on rates of use. The vast majority of people who are interested in trying cannabis have already done so.

Our government's current cannabis policies are neither effective nor evidence-based. In a modern liberal democracy, policies should be based on common sense and compassion, not fear, prejudice and misinformation.

8. The U.S. government applies pressure on Canada to back away from cannabis law reform.

U.S. government officials have issued strong warnings that if Canada goes ahead with "decriminalization" the result will be border slowdowns due to the need for increased scrutiny at the border.

FACT: Twelve U.S. states have already enacted some form of decriminalization, some states going even further than what the Liberal government proposed.

9. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has had offices in Ottawa and Vancouver since 2001.

The marijuana industry was given as one of the key reasons for the Vancouver office. The RCMP have been working closely with the DEA for many years.

10. Canada is NOT a major source of cannabis to the United States.

"Frankly, I'm worried about Canada beginning to look like Mexico as a major supplier of drugs into the United States." - *U.S. Drug Czar John Walters*

FACT: "Canadian-produced marijuana accounts for only approximately **2%** of overall U.S. marijuana seizures at its borders."

- *U.S.-Canada Border Drug Threat Assessment, Oct. 2004*

FACT: Mexico supplies about **46%** of the U.S. demand for cannabis.

- *United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNDCCP) Global Illicit Drug Trends 2002*



Cannabis prohibition is expensive, ineffective, and causing significant harms to Canadians. For the good of Canada it's time to end cannabis prohibition.

Polls consistently show **the majority of Canadians support cannabis law reform**. Politicians ignore the will of the public on this issue. It's time for Canada to become world leader in rational cannabis policy. Tell your politicians **cannabis prohibition is causing more harm than good**.

More details & source links:
CannabisFacts.ca
More cannabis info handouts:
FrankDiscussion.net