

Still a criminal record

We have had a number of callers confused about your Nov. 15 article "Bill to eliminate criminal record for marijuana possession."

Your conclusion that if a person is not fingerprinted for a criminal conviction that that person does not have a criminal record is mistaken.

There are a large number of criminal offences for which fingerprints are not taken. However a conviction does result in a criminal record. The record may not be available through the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), which only maintains criminal records supported by fingerprints, but it is certainly traceable. The criminal record can be easily traced through the arresting police force or at the courts. For persons convicted in Quebec, the record is available online through a system (SOQUIJ) which catalogues all criminal court proceedings.

If a person wishes to have a criminal record removed there is recourse under the Criminal Records Act of Canada to obtain a pardon. Only through a pardon will the criminal record not be made available.

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