



## British drug policy – a betrayal



Keith Hellowell

Former British “drug tsar” Keith Hellowell went hard against the British line in regard to drug policy when he spoke at the ECAD conference in Belfast, March 4-5, 2004. “It’s a betrayal of our citizens, and most of all – of our young people”, he said. “In spite of all knowledge, cannabis was reclassified as *a less dangerous* drug. This is a wrong decision, it lacks people’s support.”

The decision to reclassify cannabis was taken by officials on a high level. Hellowell made out that the decision makers were steered by supporters of drug legalisation.

He named Mike Trace, his own former deputy, who has later been uncovered as a fifth columnist while working for the UN Office on Drug and Crime in Vienna. Trace

advised Hellowell not to take part in the ECAD Mayors’ conference in Belfast in 2001. “According to Trace, to take part in that conference was not suitable for my position”. Hellowell regrets today that he listened less to “his intuition” than to his “poor adviser”.

In his speech in the presence of 300 delegates at the Belfast City Hall Hellowell went through some myths, among others, the one saying that *almost all young people use drugs*. Hellowell emphasised that this myth is dangerous. It is used as an argument by the drug liberals in their attempts to carry through their policy. One makes pretence that this is a natural state of affairs and continues that there is nothing to do about it but to be pragmatic. In reality, a much lesser part of population uses drugs regularly, even in Great Britain.

Hellowell resigned from his position as government’s drug co-ordinator just because of “the betrayal” as he calls the decision of de-facto decriminalisation of cannabis in Great Britain. He does not regret his resignation, maybe only that he did not pursue his policy harder when he served as the highest responsible for the drug issue in the country.

## ECAD Advisory Board meeting

Belfast City invited the ECAD Advisory Board to attend the conference. In connection with it, a regular Advisory Board meeting took place. Among other decisions, the Board agreed that

- From 2004, ECAD introduces an opportunity to apply for a grant for a study visit to ECAD member cities.

- A joint ECAD/Swedish Carnegie Institute grant, 2000 Euro, will go to a person of



ECAD Advisory Board

a great merit within the anti-drug fieldwork in Russia to stimulate further research and improvement in the subject.

- A campaign will be launched to make ECAD more known in France, Germany, Spain and Italy. Information materials will be translated into the named countries’ languages in order to better reach the addressees.

- The Advisory Board made a statement on the unsatisfactory state of affairs at the Amsterdam airport Schiphol.

## Widening of the EU boundaries – challenges and opportunities

- A deeper co-operation between the law enforcement agencies in the Baltic sea region is necessary for combating illicit drug trafficking in the region, says Walter Kegö, responsible for Customs and Police within the office of the Swedish National Drug Policy Co-ordinator, at a seminar in Riga, Latvia.

The second year in a row the heads for Customs and Border Police from the coun-

tries around the Baltic sea – Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – gather in Riga for a two-day seminar.

Besides co-operation in counteracting illicit drug trafficking, these meetings have another important dimension - considering the opening up of borders within Europe in May 2004.

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## INCB Report for 2003

The President of the INCB Philip O. Emafo writes in the foreword that the public support for the international drug control treaties is strong. He reminds of the collection of signatures initiated by Swedish NGOs that have resulted in 1,3 million names voicing their support for the UN Convention on drugs.

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## Focus on self-help groups

Seminar in St. Petersburg, Russia



Ove Rosengren, Tomas Hallberg, Oleg Mandrusov, Peter Söderlund

Though treatment of offenders strikingly differs in Russia and Sweden, the Russian and Swedish experts were in agreement on how to deal with the problem. It became clear at a seminar with the theme "Drug abuse in prisons" organised by the ECAD office in St. Petersburg.

"To start with, one needs to find out whether the prisoner is an abuser who has become a criminal or a criminal who has become an abuser", said Ove Rosengren, chairman for the Swedish association "Society without drugs", who works at a prison in the city of Gävle.

"If this is not done, one can easily miss the goal. A person with criminal identity being made free from drugs falls back into criminality and consequently back into drug abuse."

Rosengren's words received backing from Olga Kaverina from Arkhangelsk who has come to the same conclusions, even if her experience was based on a different correctional treatment system.

In Sweden (population 9 million people), there are about 5,000 prisoners. In the North-Western Russia (15 million people)

there are 84,000 persons imprisoned. Only in the notorious prison "Kristi" in St. Petersburg there are about 20,000 inmates - in a building intended for 2,500 people...

"Even if Swedish jails are better than Russian ones, it is not a "hit" to do time", emphasised Peter Söderlund from the Swedish comrade society C.R.I.S., Criminals' Return Into Society. Neither it is easier to get out of jail and to start a new life. That is where we come into a picture, told Peter.

"Our organisation starts to work with setting convicts free when they are still serving their terms of imprisonment. When they get released, we give them a "godparent" who helps them in the beginning."

And what about the results? Answering on this direct question, Peter showed proudly an assessment made by the Swedish Council for Crime Prevention in 2003. Of 210 members of the C.R.I.S.'s local boards across Sweden, only 3% have fallen back into crime. This is a very low figure taking into account what a heavy criminal background these guys have!

C.R.I.S.'s name and methods of work preceded Söderlund's visit to St. Petersburg. After watching a documentary about C.R.I.S., Vadim Sichin from organisation "From Slavery to Freedom" had started a similar comrade society.

Tomas Hallberg concluded the seminar with a call to all Russian and other countries' authorities to use the immense resources that are in these self-help groups. They really deserve all the support they can get!

"ECAD has a wide-spread contact net, it



is quick and non-bureaucratic in its management. We are united in our vision of a drug-free society".

## Dutch drug policy no role model

Cocaine use is increasing sharply in the Netherlands, and is particularly popular both among heroin addicts and young people, Health Minister Hans Hoogervorst said on Monday 22 March.

In unveiling the findings of the 2003 National Drugs Monitor, the minister said 70 to 90 percent of heroin addicts are also users of crack, the smokeable form of cocaine. He also said that the nation's youths are increasingly opting to snort cocaine.

The report indicates that the use of cocaine has been rising in popularity for several years, but the minister said it was alarming that the increase was continuing, newspaper De Telegraaf reported.

Besides the use of cocaine, the rising popularity of marijuana or hash and the increasing number of cannabis users who are seeking medical help has also sparked concerns.

The Public Prosecution (OM) has authorised the use of the dogs in city areas known for high drug abuse levels.

*/Expatica News*

## New Swedish strategy for global anti-drug work

The Swedish government adopted a new strategy for co-operation with UNODC.

The Swedish support for the international combat against illicit drugs will now be directed more to demand reduction, development assistance and strengthening of support to the UN Conventions on narcotic drugs.

The Swedish contribution to UNODC increases this year and will reach five million Euro.

The fight against illicit drugs has become one of four prioritised areas in the Swedish development assistance policy. The new strategy continues to build on a restrictive drug policy.

## Widening of the EU boundaries...

A follow-up meeting will take place autumn 2004 - a conference where we would like to invite all main figures involved in the anti-drug policies. The Swedish National Drug Policy Co-ordinator entrusted ECAD to organise this conference.

"We have found a good partner in ECAD", continues Walter Kegö.



*He said* - This is the last drop!  
*She said* - Can I have it?

# INCB cautions on “harm reduction” measures

From Page 1

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) in its Annual Report released 3 March 2004 “calls on Governments which intend to include ‘harm reduction’ measures into their demand reduction strategy, to carefully analyse the overall impact of such measures. These may sometimes be positive for an individual or for a local community while having far-reaching negative consequences at the national and international levels.”

The Vienna-based INCB which monitors the implementation of international drug control treaties has already, in previous Annual Reports, clarified its views on a range of “harm reduction” measures—actions which are taken with the intention of reducing the negative consequences of drug abuse. In its Report for 1993, the Board already “acknowledged the importance of certain aspects of harm reduction as a tertiary prevention strategy for demand reduction programmes.” In its Report for 2000, “the Board reiterated that harm reduction programmes could play a part in a comprehensive drug demand reduction strategy. The Board drew attention to the fact that harm reduction programmes could not be considered substitutes for demand reduction programmes.”

In its current Report, the Board reiterates specific statements and recommendations concerning the following “harm reduction” related measures:

## **Needle/syringe exchange or distribution programmes**

“Governments need to adopt measures that may decrease the sharing of hypodermic needles among injecting drug abusers in order to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS. At the same time, the Board has been stressing that any prophylactic measures should not promote and/or facilitate drug abuse.”

## **Substitution and maintenance treatment**

The implementation of substitution and maintenance treatments “does not constitute any breach of treaty provisions, whatever substance may be used for such treatment in line with established national sound medical practice.”

**Drug injection rooms** (facilities where injecting drug abusers can inject drugs they have acquired illicitly)

“The Board has stated on a number of occasions, including its recent Annual Reports, that the operation of such facilities remains a source of grave concern. The Board reiterates that they violate the provisions of the international drug control conventions.”

“The Board reiterates that article 4 of the 1961 Convention obliges States to ensure that the production, manufacture, import, export, distribution of, trade in, use and possession of drugs is to be limited exclusively to medical and scientific purposes. Therefore, from a legal point of view, such facilities violate the international drug control conventions.”

# INCB Report: Chapters

## **Chapter 1. Drugs, crime and violence: the microlevel impact**

In a continuation of its study of the impact of drugs on society, the International Narcotics Control Board reviews the relationship between drug abuse, crime and violence at the microlevel. The impact of drugs, crime and violence at that level is equally important as, and deeply connected with, the macro-impact of transnational illegal drug markets. At the microlevel, drug abuse is often linked with anti-social behaviour such as delinquency, crime and violence and has negative consequences for individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities that need to be addressed by the international community and individual Governments.

The review by the Board shows that the relatively small group of serious and violent offenders who are drug abusers accounts for a disproportionate amount of all serious crime committed by delinquents.

Law enforcement intervention has often been seen as the only viable response to violence and other crimes associated with drug abuse, but there is a need to explore other means of addressing such crimes:

Introducing effective and efficient policing of neighbourhoods and communities to prevent illicit drug trafficking; Offering assistance to drug-dependent persons so that they can seek treatment; Referring drug-dependent persons for treatment through the justice system as an alternative to incarceration; Involving the community in drug abuse prevention; etc

## **Chapter 2. Operation of the international drug control system**

The Board addresses the issue of “harm reduction” in the second chapter of its report for 2003.

## **Chapter 3. Analysis of the world situation**

The Board is concerned that more widespread cultivation and abuse of cannabis in Europe combined with a relaxation of controls might counteract required efforts to eradicate illicit cultivation and combat trafficking in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

## **EU Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to be located in Stockholm**

The Swedish Government decided that the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control will be located in Stockholm County.

The Centre will be tasked with co-operating with national public health institutes and working for co-ordination of action taken by Member States. The main tasks of the Centre are epidemiological surveillance, early warning and response, scientific opinions and technical assistance to Member States and third countries, as well as support for and the development of preparedness for new health emergencies. The Centre will not, however, carry on any operational activities or research of

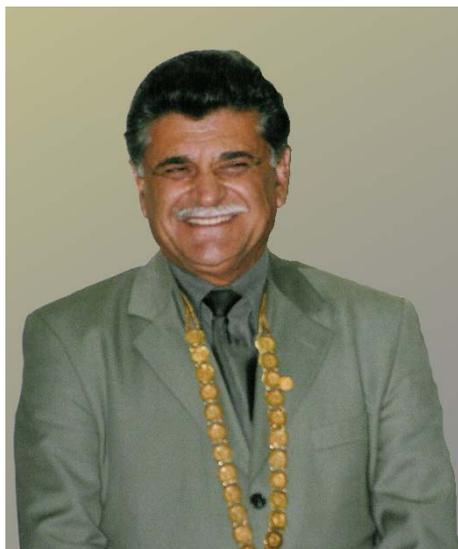
its own.

The Centre is expected to be full developed after 3-5 years and will then have a staff of about 100 financed over the agency’s regular budget.

Among the main criteria that guided the choice of location for the Centre were:

- good communications with a large number of destinations in the EU,
- access to functional and well-located premises,
- favourable conditions for agency staff and accompanying family members, and
- proximity to a stimulating scientific environment and relevant facilities.

# ECAD 11th Mayors Conference Cyprus, May 20-21, 2004



DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES!

*The role of the family in the fight against drugs can never be over-emphasized. Providing strong and safe conditions for our children to grow up makes it possible to turn drug abuse into a marginalised phenomenon in the society. The choice of drug policy is of great importance for families who need to feel the support of the society at large to zero tolerance for illicit drugs.*

*As always, we focus on restrictive and humane drug policies based on the UN Conventions on Drugs. ECAD's annual conference is for those who have not given up the fight to give our children the chance to grow up in a drug-free society.*

Welcome!

ANDREAS PETROU, MAYOR OF AGLANTZIA

The Conference Program and the booking forms are available at [www.ecad.net](http://www.ecad.net) ("upcoming conferences") or through the ECAD Head office at [paulina.lonnroth@stadshuset.stockholm.se](mailto:paulina.lonnroth@stadshuset.stockholm.se), phone + 46 8 508 29 362, fax +46 8 508 29 466

## More teens recognise harms of marijuana

*New research: Exposure and Effectiveness of Anti-Drug Advertising Continues to Rise*

Trends show a growing anti-marijuana attitude among teens, according to new findings from the 2003 Teens Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS), released February 25, 2004, by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. The findings suggest that teens are becoming increasingly aware of the risks of marijuana and are less likely to start using the drug. The report also shows a significant increase in teen exposure to anti-drug advertising since the inception of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign in 1998.

"We have been making significant progress in reducing youth drug use. The PATS survey reinforces earlier reports that showed an 11 percent drop in youth drug use. Teens are getting the right message about mari-

juana – this research shows many understand the risks associated with marijuana use," said John P. Walters, Director of National Drug Control Policy. "We hope this growing awareness will keep teens from using marijuana themselves - and encourage them to take action when a friend is using."

According to the study, the percentage of teens who report exposure to anti-drug ads over the past five years has increased by 63 percent, from 32 percent (1998) to 52 percent (2003). In addition, the study shows a 65 percent increase in the teens who report having "learned a lot" about the risks of drugs from anti-drug ads (one in five teens in 1998 to one in three in 2003).

The PATS study also shows a steady decline in teen marijuana use since 1998.

Despite these reductions in youth drug use, marijuana remains the most commonly used illicit drug among youth.

According to the study, parents and peers continue to be a powerful influence on teens when it comes to preventing and stopping marijuana use:

### ECAD RESEARCH

Two-thirds of youth ages 13-17 say losing the respect of their family and friends is one of the main reasons they don't smoke marijuana or use other drugs.

Half of teens say there is "great risk" in losing their friends if they smoke marijuana.

*Our European societies have experimented and evaluated both tolerance and intolerance to illicit drug use and drug abuse. It is our reflection upon this which guides us towards non-use. This in regard to our **neighbourhoods'** well being.*



 ECAD is Europe's leading organisation promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalisation and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. Has your city joined ECAD?

European Cities Against Drugs  
ECAD, Stadshuset  
105 35 Stockholm, Sweden  
Tel. +46-8-5082 93 62 Fax +46-8-5082 94 66  
e-mail: [ecad@ecad.net](mailto:ecad@ecad.net) [www.ecad.net](http://www.ecad.net)

ECAD Regional office in Russia [www.ecad.ru](http://www.ecad.ru)  
[zazulin@ecad.ru](mailto:zazulin@ecad.ru) Phone +7-812-328 96 65

ECAD Regional office in Latvia  
[vilnis.kipens@kurzeme.rcc.lv](mailto:vilnis.kipens@kurzeme.rcc.lv)  
Phone +371-7037330 Fax +371-7037331