

PAPER ON BEHALF OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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The Standing Committee on Health studies issues that relate to Health Canada, including bills and regulations.

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Subject: Drugs Regulating Plans in The Netherlands in the year 2017, towards similar plans in Canada

by Alfred Lagerweij

The Netherlands, Voorschoten, 12th of July 2017

Dear members of the House of Commons in Canada,

Though the bill to regulate drugs in The Netherlands is before the House of Lords, the majority of the Dutch population is averse of the use of recreational- and other drugs, because of the substantial risks of addiction and its off spring: not finishing school, no work, family and psychiatric problems.

In short

The 21st of February, 2017, in The Netherlands, the initiative bill Bergkamp, (nr.34.165), passed in the House of Commons. Through a change of the Opium Law, allowing growing and selling hashish and marijuana through a closed chain of coffeeshops, which partly regulates cannabis policy.

The bill nr.34.165 now is before the House of Lords.

This House has a somewhat different ratio of party members, than the ratio in the House of Commons. The 30th of May 2017, the latest concept report regarding bill nr.34.165 was published, of the Standing Committee of Safety and Justice. Devided in the chapters powers & policy, scale of cannabis production & trade, health & publicity, financial aspects, international aspects, many very critical questions are asked. Now we wait for the memorandum of reply.

[also see: website 'eerstekamer.nl > wetsvoorstellen, translated House of Lords, bill proposals].

It would be wise policy if Canada would contact its Dutch colleagues in the Ministry of Safety and Justice, [in Dutch Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie] in the preparation to the Canadian Bill, since many aspects, if not all, are similar.

Intro

Early July 2017, Mrs. Pamela McColl, of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, in Canada approached me, explaining that Canada is in the process of a Bill to legalise access for recreational drug use, to be passed before the House of Commons in the fall of 2017, asking to explain the actual situation of drugs, in The Netherlands anno 2017.

-In many countries there has been powers to further expand the regulations & initiatives to try legalise drugs or call it "regulate" or other verbs for the same. Lobbies financed with outside sources, in which the name of Soros often is heard.

It is very clear that much money is made through drugs, by people who don't care, what so ever, the damages. The link of drugs money with undermining activities, human trafficking, illegal weapons, terrorists activities, copy cats, etc., is a serious, not to omitted issue.

## The Netherlands

The Netherlands, since 40 years is the leading guide country in drugs issues, as if drugs were legalized there, through selling in coffeeshops. This system of allowing, in spite of Opium Law that forbid is called Gedogen. Drugs gedogen, in my opinion, started under the wrong arguments, whereas 'drugs specialists' misled not only the voting politicians, but also the people, 'that soft drug users never would become hard drug users'. Soon this proved to be very wrong, with high casualties. But history is history.

Between 1976 and now, there have been many attempts to decriminalize cannabis/marijuana, in The Netherlands to further legalize or regulate not only cannabis but also other drugs.

The party of Mrs Bergkamp, Democrats 1966, in short D66, want to legalise all drugs, after this bill has passed successfully.

Arguments pro: bill nr.34.165:

- that coffeeshops were [for the past 40 years, since the start of the experiment] supplied illegally; where a closed solution to legally through this bill a semi-legal supply construction is proposed
- that drugs sold in the selected closed chain of coffeeshops are clean and healthy.....
- that drugs criminality will disappear and
- that the police budgets can be used otherwise.

Arguments against bill nr.34.165:

- drugs are a serious health issue, to its users & to society.
- Most countries in the world signed the UN drug treaties 1961, 1971 & 1988.
- EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) and INTERPOL (The International Criminal Police Organization) "EU Drug Markets Report: In-depth Analysis, 2016" Quote: "Any measure to reduce drug supply will be ineffective unless equal vigour is devoted to addressing the demand for illicit drugs and factors that foster involvement in the drug trade."
- cannabis use is directly linked to tobacco; that is to be stopped by all means due to health matters.
- legalizing drugs will result in more –and younger- drugs users > more cannabis addicts > more hard drugs addicts > more social damage and idem costs.
- drugs will further overflow Europe through the then official leak in Holland.
- estimated 80% of drugs grown/made in Netherlands are already for export.
- regarding addiction treatment, the national system [versus market oriented addiction treatment] in The Netherlands, for many years, cannot show result data. This could mean, what some expect, and me too, that up till 100% of patients relapse, resulting
  - a. in personal dramas for both the addict and his or her family,
  - b. in substantial economical and social costs for society,
  - c. a vast group of addicted trouble makers, having not finished school, unemployed, homeless, in big debts, often in contact with police and justice;
- Open door is that families of addicted face serious trouble, often resulting in psychological settings.
- The Dutch police organization is [since many years] in reorganization, towards National Police corps, resulting, among others in low priority for drug issues. Also investigation is below par.

-Last but not least is the subject of 'Undermining activities' [how criminal underworld money forcing decisions in the real world]: in which criminals intimidate, threaten local politicians and civil servants, in order to force their plans.

Early 2017 the book Achterkant van Nederland –Backside of Netherlands' was published. Pieter Tops is a professor in administrative law, in Tilburg University and in Police Academia [pieter.tops@politieacademie.nl](mailto:pieter.tops@politieacademie.nl), whereas Jan Tromp is a journalist in one of Holland's leading papers De Volkskrant.

Gekooide Recherche/Caged Investigation dates from the year 2015. Michiel Princen is a research journalist in De Telegraaf, another leading Dutch paper, who worked in financial police investigation for 10 years, before writing this book. In short Princen showed many bottlenecks and weak points in investigation. First the contents were denied by the Ministry of Justice and Safety, in which the police is represented. Later accepted to learn from.



### Drugs, alcohol, tobacco

-Drug-use –also recreational drugs use- will cause many more addicted in young and vulnerable users.  
-We have already alcohol, as a recreational drug, where the same arguments pro and contra count, also where many started recreationally, but went addicted and struggle to stop.

In Europe now smoking tobacco is hard tackled, not only in higher prices and excise taxes, but with pictures and texts showing cancer damage through tobacco smoking.

From the states in US where the recreational drugs are regulated now, we see through the research results the increase in casualties, in numbers of addicted, in traffic accident increase, and so on. Since this was allowed by former president Obama, it is unclear how president Trump will deal with here.

My conclusions:

The 30th of May 2017, the latest concept report, regarding Bill nr.34.165, of the standing committee of Safety and Justice, of the House of Lords, was published. Having read its 13 pages of much critical questioning, to be answered by member Mrs Vera Bergkamp & crew, I conclude that the Bill, Closed coffeshop chain (nr.34.165) will either be withdrawn or will be voted negative, in the House of Lords, in The Netherlands.

Besides, it must be crystal clear that the State –in my situation The Netherlands- and not undermining groups, run, a country

**If voted negative or withdrawn, it will be a first step to slow** the demand for illicit drugs and factors that foster involvement in the drug trade, as concluded in the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) and INTERPOL (The International Criminal Police Organization) "EU Drug Markets Report: In-depth Analysis, 2016".

Yours sincerely,

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-member of EURAD, Europe for Action on drugs; a policy network for prevention, treatment and recovery. –participant in EU-Erasmus project Erasmus+ program, over Drug Awareness and Addiction on Adults Program - DAWAP. With Turkish Green Crescent /Yesilay, representatives of the Turkish Ministry of Health, Dianova Portugal & NTAKK Lithuania, Lithuanian tobacco and alcohol control coalition. 2014-2017. [www.eurad.net](http://www.eurad.net)

--worker in the drugfree community –safehouse De Stam, The Hague. [www.destam.org](http://www.destam.org)

--board member of Brave Mothers Netherlands, prevention & dealing with parents and their addicted child. [www.moedigemoeders-nederland.nl](http://www.moedigemoeders-nederland.nl)

--Friend and honorary member of the Polish MONAR organisation, for drugfree addiction and homeless care, [www.monar.org](http://www.monar.org).