

LCA

NEWS AND VIEWS
The real stories about cannabis!

The Legalise Cannabis Alliance

PO Box 2883, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 9EE

<http://www.lca-uk.org>

Christmas Issue 2008



Brainstorming with ENCOD in Basque Country

After a comfortable flight to Bilbao and a bus ride to Vitoria-Gasteiz, I was met on time at the bus station by Joep from ENCOD and a few members of Spanish Cannabis Clubs. We were taken to the small nearby village of Murgia for the three day conference workshop "Drugs and Diplomacy" organised by ENCOD for the CAPV (Autonomous Community of the Basque Country). As well as two "user group" representative from the UK, there were delegates from Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and from about 15 Spanish Cannabis Clubs.

Each brain-storming session proved to be educational and lively indeed – everybody with plenty of ideas and a very positive feeling. Before we had started the Spanish cannabis groups had prepared their own recommendations to the CAPV, now it was to be our turn. The issues were the participation of consumers and their associations in drug policies in general and in drug action in particular and the capacities and difficulties of organisations of drug users at the moment of intervening in political debate: in the UK we know how difficult it is to communicate with our own Government on policy issues regarding cannabis.

The first session, on the Friday evening, lasted over five hours! I found the format exciting and encouraging – an excellent way to get people to participate and an example for us all. We discussed our strengths and weaknesses, our opportunities and threats. The ideas that came were far too many to list but a few here.

The main weaknesses were seen as the lack of professionals, money and activists – just like the LCA! (Self)-stigmatisation of users of some drugs is a major problem. More positive, the delegates agreed that we had "truth on our side", that we are "on the streets" at user involvement levels, and have the capacity to work well as a team.

Amongst our opportunities is our ability to conduct research by users into users to break the dominance of government-funded research which could lead to greater communication and crossing of the stigmatisation barriers.

But many people present felt that users are seen as a minority of small fish that make the prohibition system work. Government tries to justify over-riding human rights with risks of harm to users. Users are stigmatised.

Ed Stratton's Human rights case that is pending in the UK, challenging the right of governments to discriminate against users of certain drugs, contrary to Property Rights – if the case is won it may indeed be an end to prosecutions for personal possession and cultivation of cannabis.

Saturday saw another two mammoth ten-hour sessions, with a third on the Sunday, and as you can imagine the details are too many to list here – I will be writing a full report which will be published on our LCA forum in the ENCOD section. For now, let me say it was all highly productive.

The main risks to drug users themselves, apart from the law, were seen as the possible social and life-style consequences, adulteration and contamination, unemployment and homelessness, stigmatisation and marginalisation, and overall invisibility.

The remainder of the time was given to evaluating and building a response and recommendations to the Summary of the Draft EU Drugs Action Plan for 2008-2012. ENCOD will produce a document that will be open for support from everyone, within a few weeks.

Despite the establishment of EU Dialogue Forum, there is a marked absence of users – the opening line of the EU draft says "Drugs are a major concern" – we disagree with that!

ENCOD's idea is to tackle risks and harms, not demand and supply. We need to define responsible use and supply, but also to allow authorities to focus more on vulnerable groups, avoiding intrusive interventions which further alienate users. We need to propose working alternative models such as self-help centres and Cannabis Social Clubs for collective growing.

ENCOD, with the support of member organisations, will submit funding proposals to both the CAPV and the EU, for research, summer schools, training and information services.

One question I was asked as about "normalisation": my reply was that there are said to be over 70 million illegal drug users in Europe and many more that use alcohol, tobacco and caffeine – so drug use IS normal. But that means over 70 million citizens criminalised for the personal choices of recreational substances – and 70 million criminals in Europe is not "normal" by anyone's standards. Clearly something is very wrong here.



My year in the LCA

I've been a member of the LCA for a year now. And what a year! My reason for joining at that time, was my way of helping the legalisation of cannabis through the small donation of £24 a year with no thought or intention of anything else.

From the start, I was made welcome and soon began to feel part of a large family that I hadn't even met. Visiting the forum became an enjoyable part of my morning routine. As I had been busted the year before (but not charged) I was interested in reading about court cases and Neil Morgan's in particular since he also lived in South Wales.

That led to offering my support to Neil, which was an interesting learning experience. When his trial day came up on the 17th June, I went to Cardiff Crown Court, there I met Jan, Winston, Marley and Neil. It turned out a fabulous day as Neil didn't get sent down but had to return at a later date. We all went back to Neil's for celebrations and so my first friendships had been forged.

I had also been interested in Pinky's protest and petition for the non-prosecution of medicinal cannabis users so, because of Winston's kind offer of accommodation I decided to make the journey to London for the protest on the 25th June. That was an amazing experience for me. I met Pinky, Chris etc. The sun was shining, we had our own little bit of Whitehall opposite Downing Street cordoned off. It all felt very homely, we were allowed to 'medicate' openly so to me it felt very decadent to sit relaxing in the sunshine smoking a spliff in full view of MI5 and the police. When the time came for Pinky to go to Number 10, I crossed the road only to take pictures of him but the policeman at the gate thought I was with them and asked if I had ID which I had so I was allowed in. Wow, never in my wildest dreams did I ever think that I'd be on the doorstep of the Prime Minister. Pinky had a spliff pre-rolled which he took out on the doorstep, I had a lighter ready in my pocket and lit it for him. That was a liberating experience and one I'll never forget, many thanks to Pinky for giving me the chance. I didn't take part in the massive moonie but had fun watching the faces of passers-by.

On the 26th July, I attended the Scottish Socialist Youth cannabis protest meeting in George Square, Glasgow wearing my LCA tee shirt, where I was made welcome by the organisers. I met up with two members of the LCA; Sworruba and Glasgow Hobbitt. Another superb day with hot sunshine, music and ganja.

Neil had been called to Cardiff Crown Court on 2nd September so I was off to Cardiff again. This time I had the pleasure of meeting norrisnuvo, an extremely nice guy. Chris was there with his ukulele, Jan and Winston (and Marley). Neil was to appear the next day for sentencing so I went back to Cardiff to offer what comfort I could to Neil who was certain that he was going to prison but once more he left the court with me. Neil is still out of prison with a deferred sentence so as far as this year goes... it's been a result.

The 18th October saw me on my travels again, this time to Pinky's Redditch protest. This time I met Dilys, Morrighan, Alun and others. Lucky with the weather again although cold. I so enjoyed the chilled vibe and music. Shame that Jacqui Smith didn't turn up despite Pinky's personally delivered invitation. She could have re-acquainted herself with cannabis. I'm sure Winston would have been happy to let her toké on his bong!

So, my first year as a member of the LCA has been eventful, exciting and fun. I'd recommend membership to everyone as it has been an extremely positive experience. I look forward to 2009 with optimism. Sincere thanks to all I've met for enriching my life.
Elfrynstar

ARE YOU GOING TO ARREST US ALL HOME SECRETARY?

It's time to end the persecution of cannabis users in this country. Prohibition is not working, it continues to fuel the criminal gangs with whom we do not wish to associate. It endangers our health due to contamination and the use of aggressive chemical pesticides. License the cultivation of cannabis for personal use, control and regulate supply to adult users in line with alcohol and tobacco, both of which legal drugs are proven to be far more damaging than cannabis and cost the NHS millions of pounds each year. End this hypocrisy NOW

For more information please visit the following web-sites.

www.arrestusall.info

The Cannabis Lobby

www.forum.cannabislobby.org

The Legalise Cannabis Alliance

www.lca-uk.org

Are you going to arrest us all Home Secretary?

BLOG and NEWS updates

www.cdca-kush.blogspot.com/

Protest London

www.protestlondon.co.uk/

Canna Zine, for the latest news on the cannabis scene

www.cannazine.co.uk

We can also be found on facebook!

WATCH OUR VIDEO AT

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkLsNyOC8pk>



THE CANNABIS LOBBY
CANNABIS COMMUNITY FORUM
EDUCATE REGULATE LEGALISE MEDICATE



One of the UK's top doctors says he's seen a big rise in the number of men having breast reduction surgery. Gynaecomastia, commonly known as man boobs or 'moobs', is a medical condition that causes tissue in the chest area to develop like a female breast. "Men who are very overweight and use drugs like cannabis are also more likely to suffer from it", said Dr Raj Ragoowansi, a consultant plastic surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital in east London.



ARE YOU GOING TO ARREST US ALL HOME-SECRETARY ?

The idea for the campaign slogan came from a post I saw in a Cannabis Lobby thread. The slogan threw down a challenge to the government on behalf of every cannabis user in the country. I had been interviewed by the producer of a forthcoming edition of the BBC Horizon programme who seemed keen to try to present a true picture based on scientific fact and personal experience. I was impressed by her comment that the film was based on science and research and therefore would not have to tow the official BBC line on the subject, which we all know to be biased and censored. It made me angry that we are always represented in the media as kids or scruffy youths in hoodies using 'skunk' as they term it to escape the hardships of their lives and that somehow cannabis turns them into de-motivated, anti social violent thugs. 'We' of course know this to be blatant propaganda and untruth.

The government appears to be unable to separate the very real problems faced by young people today from that of cannabis, and there was a strong feeling that it was time we stood up and showed that cannabis users represent every walk of society, every age group, every trade and profession and that there is no such thing as a typical cannabis user.

"Are you going to arrest us ALL Home Secretary" becomes a potent challenge when placed alongside the long list of demanding jobs that cannabis users do and of the valuable contribution that we all make to society. That and the vast number of sick and disabled people who find that cannabis helps them to cope with pain and daily life presents a powerful focus for our campaign.

What's needed now more than ever is UNITY, for every cannabis user in this country, med user or recreational user to come onboard and support this campaign. Past rivalries must be put aside, we are after all fighting for a common cause.

Please visit the campaign webpage, watch our YouTube campaign video, download and display the posters and leaflets, come and support planned local protest events, hand out the cards, anything you can do to spread the word to as many people as possible. Come and have your say in the forums (linked from the main page), just get involved in any way that you feel that you can. If you cultivate your own cannabis (as an estimated 700,000 people in this country currently do) I can understand your reluctance to get involved in openly campaigning BUT you can still do your bit by getting the message out there, displaying the posters, spreading the word sending the leaflets to your MP etc.

We must ALL push this as hard as we can and make this the most successful pro cannabis campaign ever mounted in this country. If we sit back and continue to accept the situation as it stands then many, many more of us will end up being dragged through the criminal justice system for a so called crime that has no victim. It ruins lives, destroys careers and criminalises otherwise law abiding people. It has to end now! We look forward to your support. Thank you.

Lee.



HAVE A HAPPY
AND HIGH
CHRISTMAS



Clara
New Year - New Fear?

As we say goodbye to 2008 and welcome in 2009,
We are no closer to finding the Victim of Crime
The Upgrade of cannabis to tow government lines
Is surely the worst decision made in our times?

Its time for our people, those who have some pride
To stand up for our rights and stand side by side
There is always the chance to write a good guide
To our daft government who have always lied

Let start with grow licences, Medical Supply
and move onto coffeeshops that could be fly
If Holland can have them then why oh why
Can we not have the same in Britain for you and I?

The Mp's don't listen and nor do the press
this campaign could really make you feel helpless
the fact its a long battle full of stress
and if we'll be a success if anyone's guess.

But if we all stand together as one and unite
We could change this law with a bit of a fight
The Government are wrong and we are right
So pass me a spliff and hand me a light

lets all stand up as midnight bongs on the clock
spark up a J and give the world a shock
wear a ganja outfit as your fancy dress frock
one news year eve lets make it rock

whole towns and cities surrounded in sweet
smells and aromas and not smelly feet
people all smiling and happy to greet
the strangers they pass in the cannabis induced street

even those who hate it cannot deny
weed makes you happy it don't make you cry
imagine those antis as you pass them by
wishing they had some and wondering why

forget all those people who say don't campaign
remember the sick and those who suffer pain
without hard work we cannot expect gain
we need you to join the cannabis train

so jump onboard with a smile on your face
say hi to the cannabis race
we from all over the world, all over the place
and that must be our saving grace

so Merry Spliffmas and all the best for 2009
I hope you become a friend of mine
Because you know there is still time
To join the LCA Train on the Ganja line

Twas the night before Christmas, and no weed in the house
Not a blim to be found, not even leaf.
Stash jars were stood by the chimney with care,
In hopes that The Dealer, soon would be there.

The tokers were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of big spliffs danced in their heads.
And mamma on cider, and I lost all hope,
So we pickled our brains for a lack of good dope.

When I searched all the cupboards there arose such a clatter,
I ripped up the floorboards, nothing else mattered.
The kitchen sink ripped from the wall with a crash,
As I tore up the house while searching for hash.

The moon shone down at the icicles dripping
I shook my head twice, I thought I was tripping.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight red-eyed reindeer.

With a sky-high old driver, a magical healer,
I knew in a moment it must be The Dealer.
His red-eyed reindeer all staggered and came,
As he skinned up, and sparked up, and called them by name!

"Now Big-Bud! now, Hash-Plant! now, Afghan and Crystal!
On, Shiva! On, Shanti! on Durban and Citral!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now Bong away! Bong away! Toke away all!"

They all puffed away to the Dealers wild cry,
They toked and they bonged till smoke filled the sky.
Then up to the house-top the stoners they flew,
With a pipe full of buds, went the old Dealer too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The slipping and sliding of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney The Dealer came with a bound.

He was dressed all in hemp, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all blim-burned with ashes and soot.
A massive bong he had flung on his back,
And the rich bud aroma escaped from his sack.

His red eyes-how they twinkled! As he sparked up his pipe
He sucked on that bud, so strong and so ripe!
His grinning mouth bellowed, Ho! Ho! Ho!
As he pulled out more buds, as white as the snow.

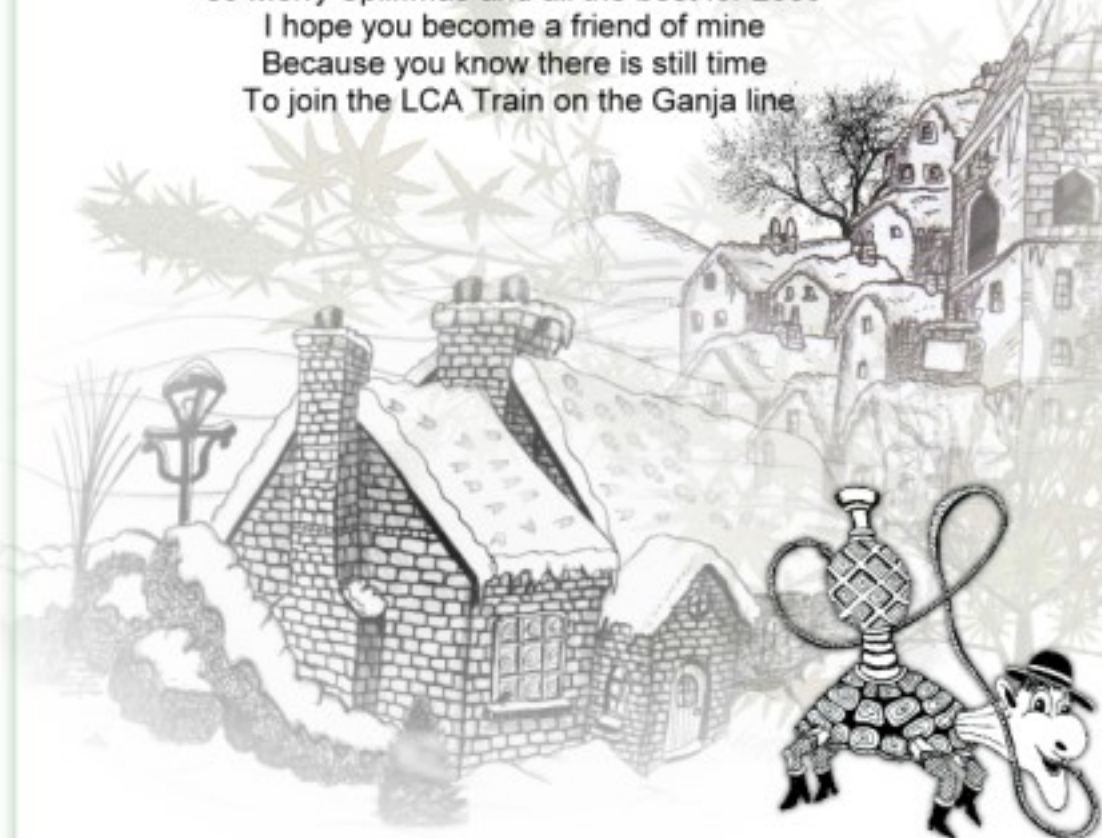
The stump of his pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
As he pulled up a chair and tuned on the telly!

He passed me a bud, a pipe and a light,
And we laughed and babbled on onto the night
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I was right off my head.

Then he spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stash jars, then turned with a jerk.
And then while laying a kilo on me
He shot up the chimney and shouted, 'It's free!'

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a blast,
And away they all flew, homeward at last.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

norrisnuvo



A pledge is not just for Christmas



What a great time to come, long nights, more sleep and a festive season to boot. This year of ignorance to science by our Home Secretary, her insistence to re-grade cannabis to class B, all this will have bothered our minds at times, but there is good news as well, the cannabis seeds ban second reading has lapsed, too many hemp uses and applications are already on the market as valuable products, but vigil is still the order of the day.

Now, whence one is overcome by those lazy moments, the food is moving slowly through hard working guts and you feel like a stuffed little piggy, pickled with fruity juices and overcome with chocolate cream delights that sparkle with encrusted sugar snow in the festive lights.

Just as you were reaching for the coffee, touched up with a shot of brandy, that's the moment of utter pleasure, when self indulgence can reach one's peak, to add that little bit of icing to our specific kind of gluttonous desire, the virtual climax for all you have worked for this year, that's the ideal time to sign the pledge on www.lca-uk.org/mainpage.php.

Or, reach for the mobile and text "pledge cannabis-vote" to 60022, with or without the dear little hyphen, a cheap Christmas present to yourself, to cheer your heart for Christmas, in a sort of self pleasuring, egoistic and absolutely secretive and pleasurable way.

Even better, cheer all your mates up at Boxing Day, not just with herb but also with deliverance and group exercising of finger skills on keypads. Joking aside, this pledge is not to be underestimated, it can be a very powerful tool to change the agenda at election time, the larger it grows, the easier it is to lever the greasy cogs of the media. Ding Dong merry merry-bells and may they ring at pledge dot org.



Happy Yuletide to all from Ingo and the LCA.

WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP TRY TO LEGALISE CANNABIS

The Legalise Cannabis Alliance is keen to support many different activities aimed at bringing down the prohibition of cannabis, and many of these activities need as much support as possible to boost numbers for maximum impact.

One way to keep in touch with campaign activities is to join our forum at www.lca-uk.org/lcaforum Or to visit our on-line events page at www.ccguide.org.uk/events.php

You can also keep up-to-date with cannabis news on the forum or at www.ccguide.org.uk/news/



Everybody pauses and stares at me
These two bongos are dirty
as you can see
I don't know just who to blame
for this catastrophe!
But my one wish on Christmas Eve
is as plain as it can be!

All I want for Christmas
is my two bongos cleaned,
my two bongos cleaned,
see my two bongos cleaned!

Gee, if I could only
have my two bongos cleaned,
then I could wish you
"Merry Bongmas."

LETTERS, PETITIONS, PLEDGES, RALLIES, MARCHES, PICNICS

WRITE TO YOUR MP at The House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, or at his or her constituency office – ask them to oppose cannabis prohibition and to vote against upgrading to class B

SUPPORT THE CHALLENGE please see www.lca-uk.org/phPetition

SIGN OTHER PETITIONS – please see www.ccguide.org.uk/petitions.php

SIGN THE ON-LINE PLEDGE to only vote for candidates that support legalisation – visit www.pledgebank.com/cannabis-votes

Or text the words "pledge cannabis votes" to 60022 – no need to give your name

Consider holding a small local event to attract interested people and maybe form a small local campaigning group to pressurise your MP, write to the local press, hold local events etc.

If you have any ideas for campaigning, please let us know – we need to work together and build a force against prohibition – we need to change the law now. Email lca@lca-uk.org

It seems so long since I could bong,
"Sister Susie ripping on a vapouriser"
Gosh oh gee, how happy I'd be,
if I could only bong (tries to inhale twice)

All I want for Christmas
is my two bongos cleaned,
my two bongos cleaned,
see my two bongos cleaned.

Gee, if I could only
have my two bongos cleaned,
then I could wish you
"Merry Bongmas."

Win

**WE WOULD LOVE YOUR FEEDBACK
OR OPINIONS ON THE SUBJECTS
COVERED IN THIS NEWSLETTER,
OR YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES WITH
CANNABIS. PLEASE WRITE TO:
THE EDITOR, LCA NEWS,
LCA - PO BOX 2883
STOKE ON TRENT ST4 9EE**



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE COMPETITION

THERE ARE TWELVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PICTURES SEE IF YOU CAN SPOT THEM!

Send your entries to: LCA, PO Box 2883 Stoke-on-Trent ST4 9EE - Include your size. LCA T Shirt for the first winning entry entry drawn. Draw on Jan 31st

Swiss say no to legal cannabis but yes to prescription heroin

The Swiss decided on 3rd December to reject a proposition to decriminalize cannabis for personal consumption, but with a large majority voted to extend a government programme which gives heroin to hard-core addicts. The nationwide referendum saw voters back the government's so-called four pillar drug policy, which promotes prevention, harm reduction, therapy and repression.

Amsterdam to Shut 43 Cannabis Cafes

Amsterdam is being forced to close 43 of its 228 cannabis-selling cafes to meet national regulations. The establishments, including the world famous Bulldog, are simply too close to highschoools.

Government Ignores Scientific Advice

U.K. Parliament's House of Lords approved the government's proposal to reclassify cannabis as a dangerous Class B drug, along with amphetamines and speed, against the recommendations of its own Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD).

PICTURE HISTORY OF THE LCA ON DVD

is available for the measly sum of £10 inc of postage and packing - these are being made to order so get your order is soon in time for Christmas.

You can send a cheque or PO for £10 (payable "LCA") to

LCA, PO Box 2883
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 9EE

or pay lca@lca-uk.org through PayPal

Don't forget to include your name and address

And don't forget to save on postage and order a

No Victim No Crime / Not Guilty LCA T-shirt at the

same time for just £6.00 extra

(subject to availability in black or green, S, M, L, XL, and XXL)

THANK YOU BABAFK FOR
ALL THE WORK ON THIS DVD

www.ccguides.org.uk/news/

The Legalise Cannabis Alliance (LCA) give their full support to a Police warning from West Yorkshire police concerning the contamination of cannabis with crack cocaine.

The Netherlands will ban the sale and cultivation of hallucinogenic mushrooms from December, the latest target of a country seeking to shed its "anything goes" image.



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