

Peter Hitchens (2012)

***“THE WAR WE
NEVER FOUGHT”***

A Book Review by
Dalgarno Institute



Peter Hitchens (2012) “THE WAR WE NEVER FOUGHT” Bloomsbury Publishing

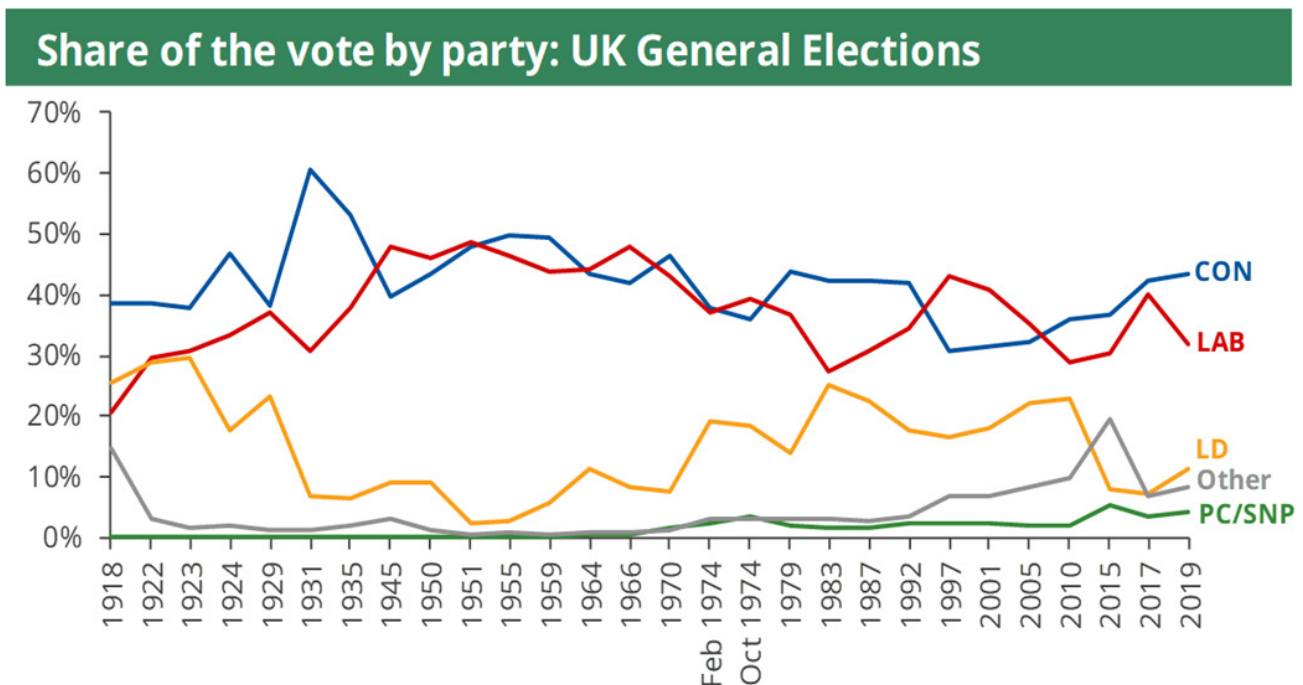
As an introduction to this book, I think it is useful to have an overview of the way in which the majority in the House of Commons changed quite often during the period which this book is reporting on (ie 1969 – 2012). Nevertheless, Hitchens argues diluting the effectiveness of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1970 was a continual process which proceeded no matter which party was in power!

The following graph summarises the changes in majority Conservative and Labour parties and lesser influence of the other parties. (eg LD = Liberal Democrats)

Source: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7529/>

General Elections

The graph below provides data on share of votes by party in UK General Elections from 1918 to 2019.



In his book, Hitchens refers to several of the following prime ministers. At critical points in the book, these leaders had influence over the direction and policies the country adopted in dealing with illicit drug use (1964 – 2016)

Name	Time in office	Political party
David Cameron	2010 – 2016	Conservative
Gordon Brown	2007 – 2010	Labour
Tony Blair	1997 – 2007	Labour
John Major	1990 – 1997	Conservative
Margaret Thatcher	1979 – 1990	Conservative
James Callaghan	1976 – 1979	Labour
Harold Wilson	1974 – 1976	Labour
Edward Heath	1970 – 1974	Conservative
Harold Wilson	1964 – 1970	Labour

Another personal reflection: When summarising this book I have noticed that much of the explanation for the continuous undermining of the U.K.'s Misuse of Drugs Act 1970 is contained in the last four chapters (Ch 21 – 24). Elsewhere in the book, Hitchens argues that the law was designed in a way that would uphold international treaties on punishing the use of illicit drugs, but in the way it was framed would allow “flexibility” in its application to the point, as he explains, it has become ineffective!



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Bloomsbury Publishing, London

Ch	Pages	
1		CANNABIS IS A CAUSE
	3	Cannabis is a curse for some. But others are claiming people should have more freedom / enjoyment
	4/5	Drug taking provides “reward” psychologically without the effort normally/previously required to achieve success – goals – accomplishments
	6/7	Risk of accepting cultural mediocrity (post Christian era) Prodrug – upholds a pretence that the justice system is harsh towards drug users
	7	Malcolm Muggeridge in observing use of hashish in Egypt during 1920’s – expressing his concern of its effects on peoples’ lives in UK (re comments he made in 1972).
	8/9	Through the acceptance of illicit drugs to achieve euphoria, a link has been broken between putting in effort to experience achievement/joy Compared to deferred rewards in past Protestant Christian civilisations Refers to Alan Bloom, USA Educator on his concerns for the young
	10/11	Drug decriminalisation will make it harder to sustain a competent, thoughtful, hard working and efficient society – but will create/promote contentment & apathy
2		HOW TO SINK, GIGGLING, INTO THE SEA
	13	British Cabinet decision in 1970 ended any opposition to use of drugs, especially cannabis - ‘officially’ protesting its use, but the law is lenient! ... The War Against Drugs is non-existent!!!
	14/15	Drug proponents perpetuate the myth of WAR ON DRUGS and claim the war is cruel – and indeed drugs cause more evil and crime!
	15	Reasoned argument: Any new law will expose evil and crime and comes at a cost (ie of enforcement) – for the benefit of the community.
	16/17	All drugs are harmful (eg heroin) and impact of dependency and inability to work or pay for it – so user ends up supported by their family or the state.
	18/19	The term ADDICTION is now being used to suggest people are victims of dependency – not responsible and not able to give up using!
	19	Difficult to identify cannabis as a CAUSATION of mental illness when so many other factors can contribute to psychosis or schizophrenia.
3		PSYCHIATRY IS NOT AN EXACT SCIENCE
	22/23	Lot of people with mental illness are going under the radar as they ‘self medicate’ to cope with life.... used as an argument to promote drug use RIDICULOUS!!
	24/25	Failure of major UK medical study (DATA 1996 – 2005) to find connection between cannabis and schizophrenia – based on data skewed only to hospital outpatients
	25	Minimising harms of cannabis reduces cost to NHS for treatment! Also reduces incentive for research showing any connection with harms.



- 26/27 Schizophrenia has increased in poorer parts of London... any link to increased cannabis use is being ignored.
Prof Sir Robin Murray is convinced there is a link.
- 27 Problem that users do not realise is the impact on their minds while friends/colleagues see the effects, yet the drug impacted users are the advocates for legislation.

4 THE REAL PURPOSE OF CLASSIFICATION - A BETTER IMAGE FOR CANNABIS

- 30/31 Historic account of how smoking tobacco increased dramatically during WW II and after – despite German doctors in the 1930’s suggesting a link between cigarettes and lung cancer.
- 32/33 Cannabis promoters are using similar arguments as did the tobacco industry spokespersons 57 years ago ie alleged effects are NOT proven to be the cause of health issues
- 34/35 Part of the resistance to a tobacco ban – interfering with the liberty of the individual
- 36/37 1971 – Cigarettes reduce stress (and pose little risk to health)
NOW – Marijuana reduces stress (and poses little risk to health)
- 37 Cannabis lobby: states any link to mental illness is accidental and users get health benefits

5 38 NO USE APPEALING TO GOD. TRY JOHN STUART MILL?

- 39/40 Pro drug lobby are using John Stuart Mill “On Liberty” to state a person should be allowed to self-harm. Taking drugs creates no victims – so not a crime.
- 40/41 How then do you deal with people who get high on alcohol or drugs and do harm to others... invoke legal restraints – thus removing “LIBERTY”?
Once drugs are legalised – it would be extremely hard to reverse.
- 42/43 Questioning Cannabis as a “peaceful” non-violent drug.
John Mill did not deal with the subsequent criminal responsibility
- 44/45 We are no islands! At risk of destroying ourselves, we also risk gravely wounding those who love us. If Law does not have force – there is no support for parents or carers.

6 CANNABIS AND VIOLENCE

- 47 Hitchens cites examples of deaths and injuries inflicted by people who used cannabis. Clearly more scientific study needed.

7 WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO, THEN?

- 53 There is a move in society towards hedonism and self-indulgence – especially in changes to laws on alcohol.
We are losing our old Socialist & Christian heritage of self-restraint!
- 54 UK Labour Gov’t – early 1900’s promoted abstinence and teetotalism! Now almost forgotten!! Opponents to abstinence confuse pleasure with happiness
- 55 The current Moral and Cultural Revolution is about the abandonment of a Protestant Christian way of life
- 55 They link all restrictions on drugs with the 1920’s PROHIBITION which failed.
Adding further impetus/distortion of the facts are the films made about the concentration of gangs based in Chicago.
BUT this is very different to the laws in place now!
- 55-56 In the USA when prohibition was passed in the 1920’s there was no law against possession of alcohol – a clear sign the legislators did not believe in the law – nor did they really believe that alcohol was harmful.



- 56 Britain's 1915 alcohol licensing laws were more effective than the US legislation – up until the 1980's when a "civilised" society and continental cafe culture embraced more liberal approach. (The British laws were designed in 1915 on the pretext of keeping munitions workers sober in wartime.) Cross reference to A Crosland's book "The Future of Socialism".
- 57a Historically in Europe, the Middle East and USSR, laws against alcohol were introduced against an established culture of consumption being OK and to be celebrated.
- 57b Cannabis, cocaine & ecstasy laws in Britain are very different to alcohol prohibition laws in other countries – extensive use of cannabis etc was not part of the culture before the 1960's, unlike alcohol which has been extensively consumed for centuries
- 58 Cannabis Laws concentrating on banning supply (since 1971 in UK) is not sufficient – as with alcohol it has not worked – the laws have not addressed advertising, possession and use of Cannabis.
- 58 What has worked in the past – laws aimed at behaviour and personal use – eg drunk driving law!
- 59 Striking contrast of effective government campaign to give up smoking – no alternative drugs offered – no victim mentality – people are seen as responsible!
Versus
Heroin addiction – all care & little responsibility of the individual!!!
- 59 WHY? Are legislators gullible and ill-informed, OR do they want to permit commercial exploitation of the public getting stoned and have government collect more taxes.

8 THE CABINET GETS IT WRONG

- 61 This chapter explains the roles of key people in reducing the effectiveness of any laws against use of cannabis and AOD... especially the Labour (conservative) party being taken over by progressive university graduates.
- 62-63 Key players:
Home Secretary (1970) James Callaghan
Chief Inspector of Dangerous Drugs Branch, Home Office (1977 – 1986) Henry "Bing" Spear
Tory Cabinet of 1970's pushed through "progressive policies" on obscene publication and misuse of drugs.
- 66-67 Summing up – Progressive drug policies made cannabis a "less harmful" drug and removed any punishment of the drug user – possession became a "minor" offence – police are not interested – they went after the dealers – but what about the growers, the importers, etc.

9 ENTER RICHARD CROSSMAN

- 69 This chapter expands on what actually happened around the time of relaxing drug use laws.
Powerful forces promoted recreational drug use (eg the Beatles influence)
The Conservative Christian sector was marginalised in decision making!!!
- 69 - 73 Richard Crossman (politician) was an Oxford don in the pre-war years who outraged colleagues and destroyed his career through relaxed moral values.... He had an affair with a married woman & behaved in a very controversial manner in his relationships and in use of drugs – along with other Oxford colleagues. His role in Parliament and new legislation was influenced by his past associations.
- 74 Hitchens queries the logic of making drug dealing a much more serious crime than drug possession.
Penalties for drug possession were diluted ... and courts were reluctant to penalise severely



74 Some years later – Conservative Lord Chancellor Lord Hailsham told magistrates to stop sending people to prison for cannabis possession (1970??)

10 JIM CALLAGHAN'S LAST STAND

77-79 Jim Callaghan was Home Secretary in the UK in early 1970's. Although conservative in his views on dry laws (he warned of potential community anger at softening drug laws for marijuana) a new law reducing max of 10 years down to 3 years for possession was passed – and other media events (eg. Strikes, inflation, rising oil prices) meant no coverage or media attention of this reduction in penalties for marijuana.

79 So drug laws are subtly weakened and while Government was declaring it was playing "TOUGH ON DRUGS" it was not really happening!!!
Consequently, when the media or concerned individuals asked "Why is all this TOUGHNESS having so little effect?" The LEGALISERS would say "Because prohibition does not work!"

80 In truth, the "TOUGHNESS" was faked – It could not work because it did not really exist!

80/81 A new UK law introduced in Feb 1970 defined 3 classes of drugs – marijuana being classed in the law as a "soft drug" is really a misleading term/description regarding its potential harmfulness – people can easily be led to thinking it is safe as "soft drink" versus an alcoholic drink.
This new law was in effect tacit approval of cannabis!
Despite a change of government, the new law was passed with no fuss!

81 Any public concerns over cannabis were diffused by the government heavily publicising (and mostly ineffective) pursuit of suppliers.

81 Another subtle change introduced by the PM Harold Wilson to placate the objectors to this more liberal approach was to increase maximum sentences for the more serious drugs up from 5 to 7 years and the less serious category (inc cannabis) up from 3 to 5 years – but in reality, they were both reductions compared to the 10 year maximum sentence under the law previous to the 1970 amendments!

81 These changes to the law allowed the "progressives" to gain ground – separating out cannabis from heroin and LSD – so that possession of cannabis (which really means use) was treated differently to trafficking.

82 In November 1970, there was a conservative Tory government elected, and even under their rule, the draft amendments to the drug laws prepared by the Labour government were passed without any alterations.
Mitchell puts this remarkable, but barely noticed event down to the Oxford graduates who as friends in the 1960's embraced very liberal attitudes towards alcohol and using recreational drugs – and who now occupied positions of influence on both sides of politics!

PART 2 THE SEARCH FOR SOMA

11 ALDOUS HUXLEY

85 Hitchens expounds on how Huxley's Brave New World and 1984 are coming true!
Read quote from Huxley's talk on "The Ultimate Revolution" (1962)(pp 85b & 86)

86 - 87 Developed by the controlling oligarchy, the drug SOMA is supplied and dispensed to the society to keep them compliant and in a euphoric state. SOMA is an instant cure for depression AND effective when given to any rebellious, non-compliant citizens!
SOMA silences worries, makes funny the unfunny & provides a holiday from reality.



- 88-89 Christianity's focus on eternal reward and scorn self-indulgence and the laws related to it – esp. those opposing unearned pleasure – as such, the drug laws in 1970 were opposed by an elite group of hedonistic Oxford graduates who moved into politics and media – actively opposed to marijuana laws – claiming the need for liberty, more gaiety and social progress.
- 90 Just looking at impact of longer alcohol trading hours (which suited Crossland) did not make life brighter and cleaner – but darker, more violent & more squalid. Under the Blair government, 1997 – 2007 the removal of constraints typical of previous Labour governments were removed. Inc revised divorce & marijuana laws.

12 THE LEFT CASTS OFF ITS PURITAN GARMENTS

- 93 Crossman, a progressive Labour politician (see Ch 8) discounts the traditional Labour values of hard work and social restraint – argues that a socialist Utopia now needs a different set of values – freedom, dissent, culture, beauty leisure, even gaiety in his book “The Future of Socialism”
He got party support to liberalise drug laws – either to be less harsh or none at all!
- 96-97 Campaign to liberalise drug use and make it socially acceptable was initiated under the name “Soma Research Association” – one of its influencers Stephen Abrams was an American. But many successful musicians (inc the Beatles) and influential UK people were involved. They personally endorsed a full page advertisement in The Times daily (which had much more impact than it would now) calling for the decriminalisation of cannabis.

13 THE MYSTERIOUS SPREAD OF CANNABIS

- 99-101 Levels of cannabis use from 1951, 1959 & 1967 show dramatic increase in marijuana possession & trafficking – Consequences were severe – except for musicians who were openly including references in their songs to the ‘benefits’ of using!!!
By 2009 162,610 arrests for possession alone – a minority went to court – most were issued a Cannabis Warning – without any real impact....
- 102 However, what was happening in 1967 was a true “War on drugs” as even use of cannabis use was penalised with a jail term.
- 102 One example of the strictness in applying the law was the arrest on 10 June 1966 of singer Donovan in possession of cannabis. His friends and fans in the music world were affronted by the arrest
- 103 At the court hearing on 28 July 1966 evidence of the nakedness of Donovan and a blonde woman in the bedroom raised interest. Defence argued that the young singer was drawn into this Bohemian way of life due to his success
- 104 The magistrate imposed a stiff 250 pound fine and advised he behave himself given his influence over young people. Donovan later gave mixed messages arguing many other artists could have been accused as well! And “In the end the government will have to recognise that **it is not harmful.**”
- 105 Such sentiments like “**It is not harmful**” and “**They will never wipe it out**” have become conventional wisdom of Conservative politicians, editors, and lead writers of conservative newspapers.
- 105 Simplistic arguments used by Donovan in his court case are being used by people more than 40 years old to abolish what is left of drug laws in UK.
- 105 Donovan adds lyrics to future songs (1967) referring to using LSD in a relationship to ‘slowly blow your little mind’ and promoting cannabis as a peaceful drug. Cannabis now associated with ‘Bohemian’ and ‘Liberated’
- 106 Donovan's case foreshadowed much higher profile singers like Sir Michael Jagger and Lord Rees-Mogg and their dramatic accusations of drug use



- 106 A seminal article in 'News of the World' 29 Jan & 5 Feb 1967 had great impact on the law and enforcement, inferring young stars took drugs.
- 107 Chief of the London Drugs Squad, Detective Sgt Norman Pilcher, advised police to take an aggressive attitude to aristocrats of rock and roll. But he ended his career in prison while those he arrested went on to riches/honour.
- 107 Police raids in 1967 in West Wittering led to arrest and conviction of Keith Richards & Mick Jagger. Soon after Rolling Stone Brian Jones arrested in London for cannabis possession. Richards and Jagger were exonerated thanks to powerful legal representation by the future Tory Cabinet Minister and Lord Chancellor Michael Havers
- 108 Despite appearing contrite when interviewed on TV by future Lord Rees-Mogg, Jagger soon gets quoted in the Daily Mirror as saying teenagers are weary of being pushed around by half-witted politicians – they want free right of expression, of thinking and living without any petty restrictions.
- 109 In 1968, the notion of endorsing personal and sexual freedom of teenagers (Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates) is argued in C.P.Snow's 1968 novel 'The Sleep of Freedom'.
- 110 Against C.P.Snow's own Godless socialist and radical inclinations his book suggests there is a high price to be paid for this new sexual freedom.
- 110 The argument for sexual liberation was being taken up by drug decriminalisation campaigners – 'to be able to do with our own bodies as we wish'. Hitchens points out that this is the pursuit of a special kind of pleasure, separated from effort!
- 110 Recreational drugs snap the ancient link between exceptional effort, courage and persistence, and the ecstatic, euphoric delights that these can bring.

14

JAGGERISM IS INVENTED

- 111 Total sovereignty over our own bodies is what Jaggerism promotes. This immoral claim lies behind issues like 'abortion rights' & diluting marriage as well as freedom to take dangerous drugs and legalise abortion.
- 111 Keith Richards in his defence of drug use saying 'we are not old men' highlights the conflict between old and young generations – diminishing the authority and roles of parents and teachers.
- 111-112 It was a revolt against the religious and conscience based moral system which prevailed until the 1960's
- 112 Clever argument put freedom to take mind altering drugs alongside freedom of speech and thought which have diminished in Britain since 1967 thanks to new speech codes of political correctness.
- 112 In June 1967, the imprisonment of John Hopkins for cannabis possession put the fear of the law into many prominent drug users for the first time.
- 112-113 John Hopkins was central to the counter culture – founder of the morally radical 'International Times' and friend to many drug users and musicians.
- 113 Author B Miles reports in 1967 many thousands of people were smoking pot encouraged by the '60s rock'n'roll songs, magazine articles, psychedelic layout, underground press and grim warnings by parents, teachers, police.
- 113-114 B Miles accepts hedonistic drug culture actively spread by music of the time and rock festivals were the evangelistic rallies. He later reports that in the '90s penalties like those for Hopkins and Keith Richards are virtually unknown unless there is large scale drug dealing.



- 114 Head of Scotland Yard Flying Squad in 1994 is published as saying cannabis has been a decriminalised drug for some time now.... With cautions being given to people with small amounts of the drug.
- 114 Miles (1994) reports that Stephen Abrams suggested clever and determined lobbying in 1967 was an effective campaign to change the law as a whole.
- 115-116 In 1967, a parliamentary enquiry led by Lady Wootton was influenced by successful lobbying and full page advertisement paid for by Paul McCartney & Brian Epstein to focus on marijuana alone and to not include LSD.
At that time the effects of recently identified THC were not known!!
- 117 These events in 1967 coincided with the arrest of Keith Richards (for marijuana) & Mick Jagger (for amphetamines which were seen as less harmful). 'The Times' ran an article on the arrests the day after they were released on bail, pending appeal.
- 117 10,000 protested in a "Legalise Pot" rally in Hyde Park and McCartneys pro-marijuana advertisement appeared soon after. All this successfully influenced the Wootton Report to focus only on marijuana (and not on the other psychedelic drugs eg LSD emerging in social circles at that time)
- 117 – 118 The Beatles were pleased as their June 1967 release of Seargent Pepper album which had many references to LSD and marijuana amongst other songs which had broad appeal to all ages. The Beatles had to find a balance between promoting drug culture while not upsetting traditional mores.

15

BLOOMSBURY TAKES OVER BRITAIN BY THE AIRWAVES

***Wikipedia:** Bloomsbury is a district in the West End of London. It is considered a fashionable residential area, and is the location of numerous cultural, intellectual, and educational institutions.*

- 119 Bloomsbury produced influential avant-garde plays, propagandist drama and radical documentaries for TV in an era when sex and bad language mores were decriminalised and were proliferating on radio and TV.
- 120 Mrs Blakewell (now Baroness Blakewell of Stockport & from Bloomsbury?) was in a double adulterous affair with playwright Harold Pinter and taking drugs. Jimi Hendrix played live in studio and everyone smoked joints!
- 120 David Attenborough as BBC2 controller of programs basically tolerated but discretely mentioned the offending smell of weed in the studio dressing rooms and warned them of consequences if the public became aware.
le allowing open law breaking in the studios of the national broadcaster!!!
- 120 Hitchens points out: The BBC was entitled to collect a licence fee tax with penalties of fines or imprisonment, but at the same time did not take action on breaches of the law on their own premises!!!!
- 121 The radical left complained in the 1960's that the establishment was crushing individual liberty – but their mantra was out of date!!
Hitchens refers to issues of legalised abortion, easy divorce and acceptance of illegitimacy showing the moral framework was already being dismantled!
Hitchens references his other books for more info on abolition of liberty.
- 121 A conservative reaction was led for a short time by Mary Whitehouse against the cultural revolutionaries such as Sit Hugh Carleton Greene director general of the BBC. Whitehouse lost the next election and interest faded.
- 122 The effect of legislative changes in the 1960's were not realised by the public until later on and the outgoing Wilson Government (1964-1979) was seen as a disappointment and a nullity but radical changes in law were passed through Private Members Bills which had support from both sides of politics



- 122 The Giants in Pop were gaining support from politicians and businessmen who wanted a share of the enormous money and influence they were earning. Eg Mich Jagger knighted... Beatles get MBE.
- 122 - 123 These music greats (Priests of the new religion "Do What Thou Wilt") knew they would lose popularity with youth buying records and attending concerts if they were too acceptable to the authorities. Not just sex and drugs, they promoted the futility of Christian faith, pointlessness of self-sacrifice, etc, etc
- 123 The loud music also engaged youth in reacting to traditional values and promoting drug use. So they protested when their heroes were arrested!!
- 124 Hitchens describes the influence of immoral behaviour of a typical minority (eg the rock elite) in the UK flowed over to a breakdown in moral values and behaviours of the wider population of middle class Britains.
- 124 Drugs were different because their effects were not well known. The idea that doctors were prescribing heroin to treat addiction of a tiny minority was false! Many corrupt doctors were freely prescribing heroin.
- 125 Similarly, marijuana was seen to be used by coloured seamen and jazz musicians as a pathway to pleasure, but it was spreading into the 'white' population.
- 125 People in authority (police, lawyers, judges, politicians) were mostly in their 50's and 60's and hardened by war did not have sympathy for the emerging values of the new generation
BUT the cultural elite and heirs of Bloomsbury and leftist politicians (mostly in their 50's and 60's) were sympathetic and about to show their power!
Eg Cannabis debate was really about self-indulgence vs self-restraint!!
- 126 Hitchens provides data on low convictions for cannabis 1945 – 1965
But then convictions doubled in 1967 and doubled again in 1968!
Data also shows dramatic increase of 'white' offenders in 1967
- 126 Wootton report suggests increased drug taking is an international movement of young people ... a position most favourable to decriminalisation of drug taking
- 127 Around 1967 police drug squads were formed and easily made many arrests.
Wootton report raises questions of the high percentage (17%) of first offenders going to prison. Hitchens questions motive for mentioning this!

16

STEVE ABRAMS STEPS UP TO EXPLAIN

- 129 Steve Abrams wrote a frank memoir of his role in decriminalising cannabis. He ran the SOMA organisation.
He wrote about the involvement of Donovan (1966), Mick Jagger and Keith Richards (1967) and the Beatles esp Sgt Pepper album in promoting drug use
- 130 Abrams organised the full page advertisement in 'The Times' to coincide with the hearings of the Wootton committee and to promote a focus only on marijuana as the drug in focus (knowing a favourable outcome most likely as it was seen as harmless) i.e. they removed harmful LSD from the enquiry.
- 131 Abrams gets the full support of the Beatles who sign the advertisement and include their MBE status! Also sociologist Michael Schofield signed.
- 131 Judge Rees-Mogg saw Mick Jagger's use of amphetamines (seen as a 'soft' drug) as trivial, but Keith Richards use of cannabis as serious.
- 132 Publicity and widespread use of cannabis caused a decisive shift in the attitude of the Wootton review stating 'the long-asserted dangers of cannabis were exaggerated and related law was socially damaging, if not unworkable.'



- 132 - Baroness Barbara Wootton was chair of the committee preparing the report which
133 became, by its own choice, a cannabis committee.
BUT the original title was "Hallucinogens sub-committee of the Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence"
- 133 Liberal Home Secretary Roy Jenkins appointed Lady Wootton to chair the committee aware of her radical views on major social, moral, cultural issues.
Hitchens expands on details of her life and achievements and attitudes.
- 134 Wootton's lax attitude to cannabis was expressed in interview detailed in Sunday Express (15 June 1969) – on her belief cannabis is a 'soft' drug and not more harmful than alcohol. Her committee created a rating scale for drugs which has no real scientific basis but is still used to this day!!
- 134 - In Jan 1969, James (Jim) Callaghan (Labour Home Secretary) had reservations and
135 stalled the Wootton report arguing caution on legalising a substance causing harm.
He got support from an opposition MP, Conservative Sir John Langford-Holt
- 135 - In October 1973, Lord Chancellor Quintin Hogg urged magistrates to go easy on
136 cannabis possession. Callaghan continued his opposition to easing penalties arguing his predecessor Roy Jenkins had been lobbying for - a more 'permissive' approach (referring to the advertisement in The Times, 1967)
- 137 However soon after the Tory election victory in July 1970, there was bipartisan support for the second reading of the Misuse of Drugs Bill and it adopted the Wootton report idea of penalties for dealing but not for using.
- 138- Re: Misuse of Drugs Bill, Hitchens reprints Callaghan's arguments put to the House
139 opposing the idea in the Bill of legalising use of cannabis and that a small, articulate group of people have harnessed the press and the media!
- 139 Hitchens points out this Bill was de facto legalisation of cannabis
On p 136 he explains the pro drug lobby never called for removal of cannabis restrictions, but to dilute them to the point they become meaningless!!
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17

THE LONG MARCH - WOOTTON AND AFTER

- 141 The legacy of the Wootton Committee and The Times advertisement in 1969 lives on in subsequent committees and enquiries every few years.
- 141 It no longer costs thousands of pounds to get arguments for legalising cannabis in the papers – it is done for free in news articles.
A repeat of the advertisement on 1969, 25 years later gets more signatures and almost no controversy. Lobbying is now far more 'respectable'.
- 142 Hitchens recognises Wootton's idealism as a mix of rational change and radical folly. And her political appointment to the enquiry on drugs was expected to be unconventional
- 142 - Hitchens does a detailed analysis of the 1969 Times advertisement" headline
143 "**The law against marijuana is immoral in principle and unworkable in practice**". Then it claims cannabis is non-addictive and makes 5 demands (in brief they are)
1. Government permit/encourage research into cannabis
 2. Allow smoking on private premises
 3. Cannabis taken off the Dangerous Drugs list
 4. Possession of cannabis either permitted or minor fine for misdemeanour
 5. Commute the sentences for people imprisoned for possession
- 144 Hitchens refutes the arguments and propositions of the advertisement on being harmless and non-addictive based on research findings since 1969 and up to 2012. He points out a lack of relevant medical info in 1969.



- 145 Steve Abrams notes that many points in the Wootton report were echoing the recommendations in the 1969 Times advertisement. E.G. On 12 oct 1973, the Lord Chancellor advised the Magistrate's Association not to 'dive off the deep end' when dealing with cases of cannabis possession. Pointing to a distinction of possession vs trafficking in the 1971 Act's main provision.
- 146 Even this advice was diluted in January 2012 the Sentencing Commission advised that people in possession of 13 lbs of cannabis should not face prison. And illegal drug users to be viewed effectively as a pitiable victim
- 146 In first full year of operation of the 1971 Act cannabis offences had risen 37% - from 9,219 to 12,599. Yet, as data was released, Home Secretary Robert Holmes boasted that **"The UK has no substantial drug abuse and can claim modest success in fighting it."**
- 146b –
147 Sir Edward Wayne presented a letter from the Wootton Committee to James Callaghan (Labour Home Secretary) cautioning that the effects that even small amounts of cannabis may produce in some people should not be dismissed as insignificant. And wider use not be encouraged. The report concedes that people should be able to make their decisions, but those who excessively indulge nearly always become a burden to their family. (Hitchens calls it strange/Edwardian apologetics!!)
- 148 Hitchens continues his critical analysis of Wayne's letter questioning the proposition that interest in mood altering drugs can be ascribed to disenchantment with competitive nature of contemporary society
And suggestion that those using cannabis and LSD are searching for spiritual experience and 'new levels' of consciousness, etc SO WHAT? asks Hitchens!!
- 149 Hitchens goes on to query Sir Edward Wayne's report inaccurately mentioning the American prohibition of the consumption of alcohol. Also, the report has no real hard information...e.g. citing the prehistoric 1894 Indian Hemp Drugs Commission and the antiquated 1944 New York Mayor's Commission on Marihuana which indicated that consumption of marijuana in 'moderate doses' has 'no harmful effect'
- 149 The authors of the report also infer that the reports of psychotic states from using marijuana make it difficult to determine the exact role of marijuana. But Hitchens (in 2012) points out that correlation between marijuana and mental illness (thanks to wider use) is far more persuasive than in 1969.
- 150 Hitchens calls out the inconsistency in the Wootton report – going easy on research which is complacent and not adverse to drug taking but highly sceptical of any information critical of drug use. Examples provided include problems of excessive long term use & adverse effect of marijuana on youth
- 151 Hitchens tracks how arrests for marijuana use escalates dramatically after. Eg cannabis arrests in 1957 = 51; in 1965 = 626, in 1966 = 1,119, in 1967 = 2,393 but by 1972 = 12,599! And after Wootton report fully implemented enormous rise in cannabis arrests. Eg in 2009 = 163000
- 151 Hitchens bemoans the lack of opposite points of view being considered by the Wootton Enquiry which appears 'simperingly sympathetic to the drug!
- 152 The Wootton report infers that professional people who used were seeking relaxation or enlightenment. They were productive people and would stop using if they thought it unfit for their lifestyle. Likewise, the unskilled group of users were seen to be equally productive. Those who had social/emotional issues were seen as a very small minority.
- 153 Hitchens criticises the report's subjective social and cultural arguments, not scientific and the 'undoubtedly sympathetic tone'. Examples provided.



- 154 Hitchens points to arguments in Wootton report being repeated and elaborated on ever since in the media. Arguing marijuana is less harmful than legalised alcohol & much less harmful than opiates, LSD, heroin. All subjective arguments!! Also pointing to historic attempts to ban tobacco!!
- 155 More subjective conclusions. Eg Increasing numbers of people, mainly young, in all classes of society are experimenting with this drug.
Hitchens: They are not carrying out an experiment, measuring outcomes!! This word in the report legitimises their illegal pleasure seeking activity!!
- 155 The report contradicts itself in stating no evidence of cannabis and crime – but also in the report cannabis is associated with aggression & psychosis!!
- 156 Hitchens points to Lady Wootton's personal views (not impartial nor clear headed) that cannabis is no more harmful than alcohol (reported in The Sunday Express) . Also quotes her opinion piece – that legislative restrictions on cannabis exaggerate the dangers of the drug and needlessly interfere with civil liberties.
- 157 Hitchens continues to critique her one-sidedness and the clever conclusion to the report recommending possession for personal use or supply on a small scale not impose a prison sentence. The Report does not formally decriminalise cannabis but opens up society for a greater uptake!
- 158 When the report was debated in the House of Commons, James Callaghan as Home Secretary strongly opposed any reduction in penalties for cannabis.
Baroness Wootton & Sir Edward Wayne (chair of the committee) published an article in "The Times" arguing Callaghan had been "offensive" to suggest that committee had been over influenced by the lobby in favour of cannabis
- 158 By not advocating legalisation, but modifying existing penalties to the point of nullifying the law, the pro drug lobby win more ground than legalisers!!
A poorly informed public are assured no major changes are being made !!
- 159 20 members of the Drug Advisory Committee met and responded to Callaghan's strong negative response with a tirade in the Sunday Times, threatening the whole committee would resign. Callaghan concedes on some key points of the report – Cannabis is taken off the dangerous drugs list + personal consumption legalised but trafficking remains an offence.
- 160 Wootton report influence continued after change in legislation
Eg Lord Hailsham's address to Magistrates Association in Oct 1973 'more or less ended' imprisonment for cannabis possession. (see this text p 145)
- 160 Steve Abrams publishes a book on the decriminalisation of cannabis in Britain. He reports that in 1976 the penalty of cannabis possession was reduced by half – one month less than the maximum recommended by the Wootton Report. Roy Jenkins as Home Secretary was directly involved in applying this law – thus completing a process he started when he appointed Barbara Wootton to write the report in 1969.
- 161 Abrams in his book also points to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs in 1979 proposed further reforms to remove the power of the courts to send offenders to gaol – by introducing cautioning and small on the spot fines for smuggling. Abrams reports by 1990 cannabis offenders were let off the hook with cautions and no criminal record. If they did go to court, cases were normally discharged or small fines imposed.
- 161 While the media, politicians and drug experts considered the Time advert to be a failed initiative, it was anything but a failure!!! And they also had the misconception that the Misuse of Drugs Act increased penalties for offenders which it did not!!!
- 162 Hitchens reports on a scathing attack by Barbara Wootton on a conservative journalist who was critical of recent drug reforms. Published in The Times 21 Mar 1977, she argues there is a great change in public opinion across nations being accepting of cannabis AND her committee's report never recommended legalising cannabis



- 163 By 1981 the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs urged the barely used penalty for possession of cannabis be deleted from the law. The Thatcher government moved towards decriminalising – with police giving cautions rather than pursuing convictions for use and small fines for dealing.
- 164 In 1994, former head of Scotland Yard Flying Squad wrote an article in The Daily Express complaining that the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard was proposing to increase fines for cannabis possession from 500 to 2,500 pounds.... When 'Cannabis has been a decriminalised drug for some time now' Although still illegal someone in possession would likely get a caution.
- 164 Hitchens challenges the police argument that pursuing and prosecuting cannabis offenders would take police away from more important crime. Hitchens argues it is this lax approach which exacerbates the use of cannabis!
- 165 Hitchens turns his attention to the similar lax approach police took to prosecuting for hard drug offences. This approach was supported by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs which in October 2011 stated in the Daily Telegraph (14 Oct 2011) "possession of any drug for personal use should be decriminalised." Council chair Prof Les Iverson suggested that those caught in possession should be diverted away from criminal justice system and into drug education and awareness courses.
- 165 Hitchens feels police were taking the easy way out in relation to drug use and explains that by 2011 there were many disincentives for police to pursue and prosecute cannabis users and dealers, as even the courts were not likely to impose any substantial fines or prison sentences. Reflecting the views of former head of Scotland Yard Flying Squad 17 years earlier! (see page 164)
- 166 Hitchens discusses the changing views of the police – the penalties for drug use being reduced significantly as a disincentive to prosecute small scale offenders – and the change in culture and backgrounds of police coming from 1960's graduates who view cannabis smoking as a civil liberty and a victimless crime. Historically police came from the traditional conservative
- 166 Hitchens final shot is at the views expressed by Mr O'Connor, (former head of Scotland Yard Flying Squad?) who considers that cannabis users are not on the streets committing crimes – so why pursue them (wasting time and losing public credibility) when there are other more serious impact crimes (eg assault/theft) being committed. Hitchens thinks police should enforce the law (just as firemen should put out fires!) ... far from impressed by this logic!!

18

WIDDECOMBE UNFAIR

- 167 In year 2000, while many on the Tory party held to conservative values, there was support for (Tory) Shadow Home Secretary Anne Widdecombe had more unconventional readiness to be 'unfashionable'. Hitchens describes the rift in the Tory party between social liberals led by former defence secretary Michael Portillo and more conservative faction led by Anne Widdecombe. (Note: The Blair government was in power at the time.)
- 168 While M Portillo fought hard for moderate liberal policies, he was to fail and his position taken over by David Cameron who became party leader.
- 168 At a Tory party conference at Bournemouth in 2000, Anne Widdecombe pushed for a fixed penalty for cannabis possession of 100 pounds....on the liberal side of the Wootton 1969 report recommendation... and for no imprisonment of cannabis users. She got a favourable response.



- 169 - Her speech to the party conference infuriated the older leadership and supporters
171 of Michael Portillo. The press got on to a passing comment in the hotel bar – that if you ask you will find many Tory members have tried it. A keen reporter of the Mail on Sunday took up the idea and published info on several Tory shadow ministers who had tried cannabis as Cambridge University students and excused their behaviour as harmless experimentation you do when you are young.... a passing phase in their lives. Peter Williams, of the Police Superintendent's Association (typically strongest supporters of weakening drug laws) declares "Our priority is not to punish people for possession, but to divert them from drugs".
- 172 Hitchens describes how Widdecombe was overwhelmed when 40 press attended alone the Tory party Press Room at Bournemouth that following afternoon struggling to defend her crumbling position. Much to the delight of the Michael Portillo and the social liberal Tory faction.
- 172 Sources from the governing Conservative Party were said to be 'gleeful' that Widdicombe had been defeated by her own party - thus maintaining the status quo.
- 172 The subsequent Tory Party manifesto for 2001 election had no mention of Widdecombe's plan nor any mention of cannabis. They effectively restored the focus (since 1970's) of "cracking down" on the "evil dealers" – whose drugs seemingly ceased to be "evil" once in the hands of the users!!!
- 173 Hitchens laments how drugs are now blighting even our rural communities, ruining lives and causing a wave of other crimes. Eg burglary & muggings
- 173 Hitchens points to the most evil of all drug dealers targeting under-16's
- 173 Widdecombe soon left politics to become a TV personality and novelist. Many who opposed her faded into obscurity and the Tory party lost whatever was left of their social and moral conservatism which was prominent in the 1960's
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19

DAME RUTH RUNCIMAN AND THE LIBERAL ESTABLISHMENT

- 175 Dame Ruth Runciman described herself as 'the ultimate do-gooder' (The Observer, 14 Jan 2001). She was appointed by Roy Jenkins to the "Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs" in 1974. Born and educated in South Africa she benefited from a liberal wealthy class upbringing. She is connected well to the cultural, political and academic 'progressive' elite.
- 176 In Jan 2001, the Daily Mail reported on Prince Charles giving his approval to a 'high powered inquiry into drugs likely to propose sweeping changes to drug laws'. Hitchens argues that press items prior to a report win public support
- 177 Another govt Minister Marjorie Mowlam who revealed in the past she had smoked cannabis was in charge of the Government's 'fight against drugs'. She declared she would fight against hard drugs that kill people. The opposition party did not object. Being an independent inquiry suited the Government as it could reject the recommendations if the public reacted and implement them later through other means when the public reaction died down!
- 178 Minister Marjorie Mowlam initiated the Inquiry in 1997, led by Lady Ruth Runciman but did not report until March 2001 – after the UK elections had been completed. This gave better chances for liberal changes to take place.
- 179 Dame Ruth claims the so-called war against drugs is unwinnable. You cannot eradicate demand. You can have rational sensible policies to contain the problem, and effects on health and families. That is our aim.
- 179 Her final report gave the impression strong enforcement had failed, without emphasising that those penalties were not consistently or strongly applied.



- 180 Ruth Runciman's committee also has keen supporters of liberalising laws: eg Sir Simon Jenkins and Professor David Nutt. Purporting to be "Independent" it was hardly so as key members had already made up their minds on cannabis.
- 181 Fear of another Brixton (riots in 1981 based on allegations of police prejudice and racism – displayed in stop and search policing) plays a large part in police enthusiasm for defacto supporting decriminalisation of cannabis.
- 181 Ruth Runciman's report suggests the prosecution of the drug abuser is worse than the taking of the drug in the first place. Her report conclusion that after much deliberation and evidence that "the current cannabis laws cause more harm than they prevent." And reflecting on the adverse impact for life on the young drug users – otherwise law abiding citizens – if they receive a criminal conviction for drug use in their youth.
- 182 Hitchens suggests that the establishment (authorities and police) were confident Ruth Runciman would come up with liberal, decriminalising recommendations based on a speech she gave at an ACPO conference on drugs in May 1992, 5 years before the "Independent" Inquiry was set up!!
- 182/3 Hitchens again questions the logic in saying "eradication of drug use is unachievable" as a good reason for not enforcing the laws against drugs.... He asks what might happen if other crimes such as burglary, drunken driving, fraud, etc were treated the same way because elimination is impossible??!!
- 183 In regard to international obligations, the law makers are aware that they have an obligation to not make illicit drugs fully and formally legal. So, Hitchens claims, they make the legislation to have penalties with the least impact – to the point of being ineffective in reducing drug use. He quotes a concluding paragraph of the report which supports his claim. See p 183b
- 184 –
185 While the Runciman report states the UK drug laws are "severe", Hitchens points to a statement by Runciman in a BBC forum (Oct 2001) which does not reflect on a "punitive system" but rather a lenient one!! In Brixton, the police began trialling a caution for drug possession that did not incur a criminal conviction... an approach which was within the Drug Misuse Act and for which Runciman applauded the police for using their discretion. And even in the courts, the maximum penalties for drug possession in UK are never imposed!
- 186 Major increase in drug offences from 78,000 a year in 2001 (Year of Runciman Report) to 161,000 offences in 2009. Hitchens suggests that the influence of intervention of Dame Ruth Runciman and Brian Paddick weakening the existing laws of the time.
- 186 Hitchens also connects the weakening of the drug laws from time of Lord Hailsham's "no prison" speech to magistrates in 1974, with 'community penalties' being applied instead. (in 1974 there were only 12,532 drug offences but in 1997 there were 113,154 offences and about half of these were only cautioned for drug use.
- 187 Hitchens complains that the mention of this trend towards cautions and escalating number of people apprehended and offenders diverted away from the courts. gets only a brief mention – without any deeper analysis!
- 187 Basic recommendations of Runciman Report – greater use of cautions and an end to use of prison for cannabis possession, plus downgrading of cannabis possession to lowest grade of offence under the 1971 Act
- 187 Hitchens points out that the British media in 2000 were under the impression the law was being harsh on drugs and the Runciman recommendations 'were radical new measures rather than an official confirmation of a quarter of a century of soft justice and soft policing.'



- 188 – Hitchens points out how Runciman got support for her proposals from a basically conservative newspaper The Daily Mail – in March 2000 – and then support in news stable mate the London Evening Standard – countering the government/Home Secretary’s rejection of the Runciman proposals – and calling for frank and open debate – deploring ‘hard drugs’ calling for punishment for traffickers but leniency on users of cannabis. Using the argument that the ‘forbidden fruit’ approach induces people to try/use.
- 189
- 190 Then The Standard news paper chimes in with equally questionable arguments questioning the law treating penalties equally for hard and soft drugs and chasing cannabis users when in comparison thousands are suffering and dying from legal alcohol and tobacco use
- 191 – The Fleet Street newspapers were recruiting their best writers from universities and these reporters were sympathetic to cannabis use (many from personal experience at university) using the argument that drugs that have come to the UK are not ‘fundamentally different’ from alcohol and tobacco, providing pleasurable sensations and incurring some health risks.
192 Again criticising the rejection by the Government as a ‘knee jerk reaction’
- 193 The Financial Times provides a critical review (written by Martin Wolf) of the Government’s response to the Runciman Report whose recommendations were ‘moderate’ and whose panel were ‘respectable’. The news article also raises the old argument of alcohol being worse!!
- 194 – Hitchens applauds the perceptive article by Toby Young in the Observer (April 2000) pointing out there is no good reason to distinguish Cannabis from other drugs (eg Cocaine) in terms of harm inflicted.
195 Young admits to experiencing harms of cannabis and provocatively suggests legalising all illicit drugs and not just favour cannabis when all cause harms!!!
- 195b – Runciman Report made 81 recommendations. Chief ones – scrap powers to arrest and imprison cannabis users. Introduce ticket style fixed penalties for soft drug offences. Place cannabis as a class-C drug. State’s drugs budget not used on law enforcement but on education and treatment of users.
198 That medicinal use of cannabis be legalised. An end to prosecution of owners of premises where cannabis was smoked. Harsher penalties for cannabis dealers. Hitchens notes medical use of cannabis did not feature in the Wootton Report, but grew in importance since then. And Runciman claimed cannabis relatively harmless. To cover up their liberalising approach the report declared “There is no question of our recommending legalisation of any of these drugs.”
Hitchens notes this is completely inaccurate, but the proposed changes remain cunningly within Britain’s Treaty obligation.

20

LEGISLATION ON THE BEAT – BRIAN CADDICK

- 199 Hitchens calls out the mantra of middle class conservative people that “the laws against cannabis threaten to ‘criminalise’ young people... even though nobody is forced to use cannabis and it is known to be against the law.
Instead of pro drug advocates attacking the law, the claim the law is attacking the drug users!
- 199 Professional people who tried drugs when younger see it as harmless when used by their children!
- 200 Hitchens details over time how the 1971 Drug Misuse Act laws have been liberalised in their interpretation and their application.
Eg Police were issuing warnings for cannabis use and very few went to court...if they did it was usually because other charges were laid as well.



- 201 the 1971 Drug Misuse Act was under continuous review no matter which party was in government. Any politician who took a more conservative approach to penalising drug use had their character flaws exposed in public!
- 202 Penalties for cannabis possession were watered down over time
E.g. In 1973 advice given to magistrates to avoid gaol sentences (see p 201)
E.g. In 1994 police were advising the media that cannabis possession was effectively decriminalised + police were lobbying law makers as well!!
- 203 E.g. In 2001 Police take the law into their own hands Mr Brian Paddick, senior policeman, assumed to be given approval from his superiors takes a new initiative in Brixton** instructing police to simply confiscate drugs from users and just issue a warning. Paddick argues that the aim is to disrupt the drug market and free up time to chase the drug dealers.
(** Note Brixton had riots over police brutality and racism in recent past)
- 203 – Trend was to treat cannabis possession like shop lifting or illegal parking.
204 Media rarely opposes this more liberal approach.
- 205 Paddick is applauded for his 'success'
Politicians on one hand were claiming to be "hard on drugs" but at the same time were happy to let penalties reduce to the point of insignificance.
- 206 More evidence that politicians were saying government policies were "hard on drugs" but were silently allowing more lenient approaches to cannabis possession – in line with Dame Ruth Runciman's Report (which they openly denounced as being too liberal!!! Hypocrisy!!!)
- 207 The Evening Standard (March 2001) exposes Labour as saying no changes to drug laws if elected ... BUT in June 2001 a six month "pilot scheme" of softer treatment for "cannabis possession" justified by arguing it will "free officers for more serious crimes".
- 207 Also, policeman Paddick gives his rationale for leniency on cannabis possession and is quoted as saying this approach will avoid violence and racial conflict.
Hitchens notes that if anyone else had made this claim for leniency, there would have been complaints like "Police take law into their own hands!!"
- 208 Police in Lambeth District were also adopting a more lenient approach on cannabis.
- 208 Police in Brixton were concerned they would fail an internal integrity test if they informally confiscated drugs without arresting and charging. so they approached Paddick for formal permission to deal with cannabis in a more relaxed way. Paddick floated a policy of 'on the spot warnings' in the "Evening Standard" to test reactions without consulting his superiors.
- 209 Some unknown person briefed the Evening Standard that Scotland Yard was supporting Commander Paddick on this new initiative of being lenient on cannabis possession.
Paddick refused to discuss how he won over Scotland Yard with this policy!
Hitchens notes that this ploy paved the way for the politicians to back track to harsher penalties for marijuana possession if they had to!!
- 210 Drug decriminalisation lobbyist Sir Simon Jenkins – on 5 July (2001?) told the Evening Standard that the 1971 Drug Misuse Act had been unchanged and (in 30 years) has made London the "most lucrative drug-ridden city in Europe" Hitchens notes the 1971 law had not been reformed in that time, but it had been greatly diluted!!
- 210 Hitchens points out that as correctly stated by Stephen Abrams (veteran pro-decriminalisation campaigner) the purpose of the Drug Misuse Act was to move in the direction of decriminalising cannabis possession
BUT Hitchens complains that this was being done behind a political screen of militant anti-drug rhetoric! Which had fooled most commentators.



- 211 Hitchens makes a critical assessment of a newspaper article by Sir Simon Jenkins (Drug decriminalisation lobbyist) in which Sir Simon argues
1. The 1971 Act involved harsh prohibition strategies
 2. The Act has failed in its purpose
 3. It is absurd to carry on with the 1971 Drug Misuse Act
- Then arguing that while demand is so high and the Law has not worked – go back to a pre 1971 Law situation, but regulate and tax the otherwise law abiding citizens for their purchase of cannabis.
Hitchens claims this recommendation would mean the government becomes part of the trade in narcotics and taxing narcotics! The UK a Narco-State!!
- 212a **Sir Simon Jenkins statements and his significant influence are reasons why Hitchens has researched and written this book! Hitchens particularly objects to Sir Simon's claims that the 1971 Drug Misuse Act entails harsh penalties!**
- 212b The mantra of “Waging a war against drugs” leads to 3 things:
1. Politicians appear to be “tough” when objecting to the existing law being changed
 2. Police and Justice System continue to dilute the 1971 Act
 3. People who genuinely try to correct the real mistakes in government policy will be excluded from the debate.
- 213 Hitchens explains how the less punitive treatment of cannabis users applied in Brixton in 2001 (via Brian Paddocks initiative) is extended to the whole of the UK by a decision of the Home Secretary David Blunkett – using the argument that cannabis was classified as a CLASS – C drug to justify the withdrawal of penalties for cannabis.
- 213 The Evening Standard on 24 October 2001 confidently reports on the subsequent saving of 74,000 policing hours spent on arrests for trivial amounts of soft drugs so police could fight other crime. Hitchens objects to the clever use of words like the “retreat” of law enforcement (as if it was intense before hand) and also “trivial” amounts of “soft drugs”. Also, the other crime to be addressed is never mentioned!!!
- 214 The newspaper applauds Commander Brian Paddick who (quote) “put common sense before the law which was failing the community”
The newspaper also gave credit to Dame Ruth Runciman and her Police Foundation report on drugs and the law for this “startling shift” in policy. Hitchens points out there was nothing startling – this was just a continuation of the effort to decriminalise cannabis use.
- 215 It was an article in The Mail that accurately described the Association of Chief Police Officers as being the national policymaking body, and in their view the Government strategy had failed to turn the tide of drug use, deaths and drug related crime.
- 215 The Evening Standard in January 2002 was reporting Paddick's experiment in the six months of the Brixton pilot scheme a success and was being extended. The article listed the saving of 2000 hours of police time and saved 4 million pounds in potential court costs.
- 216 -
217 A different opinion was expressed by Fred Broughton chair of the Police Federation who reported to the Home Affairs Select Committee that anecdotal evidence was that more people were involved in cannabis and more seriously crack abusers and crack dealers were becoming more visible and more active.
This opinion was rebutted on 20 March 2002 in the Standard which claimed.
“The ‘softly softly’ drugs policies of Brian Paddick ... have resulted in more arrests for hard drugs and a fall in street crime”
Hitchens is annoyed by the use of ‘perfectly amazing’ statistics which suggested the policy was not only successful, but flawless!!! See p 217 for these incredible/unbelievable stats and details of success!!



- 218 Hitchens exposes the folly of using statistics to draw incorrect conclusions. Pointing out that having fewer laws will result in fewer arrests, but not necessarily in less trouble, less human wickedness or less grief!
- 218 - In April 2002 The Evening Standard runs an article - a statistical counterblast to the
219 earlier Paddick success article (see above). Suggesting the Brixton/Lambeth Borough cannabis experiment suffered a set back with Scotland Yard showing a 13% increase in number of dealers and drug users moving into the borough in the first 6 months of the pilot project.
- 220 Hitchens exposes the inconsistency in arguments put forward to justify the value of the pilot scheme - and the argument that deployment of policing from Class C drugs like cannabis to Class A drugs would resolve the problems
- 220 Hitchens calls out the way that young people would see cannabis possession does not mean a criminal offence - but this would never be openly avowed by any senior official person.
- 220 - The Mail in May 2002 reports a most senior officer of Scotland Yard admits to
221 'significant flaws' in the softly softly approach to cannabis pioneered by Brian Paddick. In addition, the Police Review magazine reports District Assistant Commissioner Michael Fuller saying more drug dealers being attracted to the trial area. PLUS admitting children in Brixton were arriving at school 'stoned' through smoking cannabis as a result of the policy. ALSO expressing community concerns that experimentation may lead to harder drug use.
- 221 - The member for parliament in the area involved in the Paddick experiment (Labour
222 MP Kate Hoey) speaks out against the Paddick initiative stating several reasons inc undermining of law and order, reduced police morale and increased drug use by young people. Dealers are offering drugs more openly. Her concern - the message that taking drugs is not harmful.
- 222 Hitchens shows how senior police officers were still persisting as if the change was entirely benevolent. Eg article in The Evening Standard showing police chiefs are planning to extend the Lambeth 'softly, softly' approach.
- 223 The Mail on Sunday 14 June 2002 reports on how the Home Office tried to muffle opposition to liberalising arising from police officers - one senior police officer told to revise his report because it was 'too negative'. The article exposes Home Secretary David Blunkett's determination to view the pilot scheme a success, (despite a huge increase in street robberies) to downgrade Cannabis to Class C and extend the scheme.
This insightful report also indicated that Government pressure had stifled opposition to the changes and Scotland Yard's senior management were divided on the evaluation of the Lambeth Borough experiment.
- 224 Hitchens describes how the Government tried to justify the new approach even though the evidence from a survey of police officers in Lambeth Borough were mostly negative and a Scotland Yard source allegedly said "No one wanted to tell the Government the scheme did not work."
- 224 So the Brixton pilot was officially classified as a success and the ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) circulated forces with the news and the policy of 'Cannabis Warning' was quietly introduced!!
Hitchens writes disparagingly of the 'softly, softly' approach.
He states "The only thing that is soft is the law enforcement"
He also notes the 'endlessly flexible 1971 Act has survived unamended'.
And the slow implementation of the Wootton report is now almost complete. A process which Hitchens claims has gone under the radar of anyone who might have opposed the change if they had noticed!!



- 225 Hitchens points to the misinformation that has surrounded “Medical” benefits of marijuana. Esp. since it is near impossible to have a study which involves a placebo/ control group smoking something other than marijuana.
It is nearly impossible to have objective assessment of its effectiveness.
In cases like glaucoma medical opinion is that there are better, more effective options.
- 226 Hitchens questions the motives of people advocating for use of marijuana for pain relief when they are campaigning for decriminalisation instead of campaigning for medical licencing and controls (e.g. as is medical morphine)
Smells like propaganda for legalising marijuana! Or they are being used!
- 226b - 227 Hitchens refers to a statement of Keith Stroup many years ago revealing that he saw ‘medical marijuana’ as a red herring to get the drug a good name!
Hitchens quotes Stroup, a lawyer in the USA, who in 1970 established NORML (National Organisation for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) and was quoted in Emory Wheel a US university news paper on 6 Feb 1979
- 227- 229 Hitchens references several publications and shows the inconsistencies in Keith Stroup’s attempts to later distance himself or explain away his reference to the red herring strategy to legalise marijuana,
- 229 While several states in the USA were legalising marijuana for medical use, legalising the sale of large amounts of marijuana, it is the growing acceptance in the British public of sympathy to use of ‘medical marijuana’
Noting also that the Runciman (Police Foundation) Report in 2000 referred sympathetically to its use for medical purposes.
- 230 However, Prof Leslie Iverson, a leading figure in the British Govt drugs establishment published a book “The Science of Marijuana” who acknowledges several therapeutic uses of cannabis-based medications but declares evidence of clinical effectiveness is woefully inadequate.
Hitchens explains how this underlies the problem of distinguishing between the euphoric effect of the drug and its therapeutic effect
- 230- 231 Hitchens concludes that the ongoing campaign in USA and has introduced healthy people in the USA to cannabis and strengthened the campaign for decriminalisation in Britain.
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- 233 Hitchens picks up on the common argument that relaxing cannabis laws will “free up” police to “crack down” on the real problem of hard drugs and (of course) “evil dealers” – not to mention the innocent, pitiable users!!
- 233 - 234 Hitchens talks of his difficulties in trying to obtain figures from the Department of Justice on arrests for trafficking and possession of Class A drugs. And also on how such offenders were treated by the courts.
Limited success, but did get info from Nicola Blackwood, MP for Oxford West
- In 2010, 2,530 people convicted and sentenced for supply of Class A drugs or possession with intent to supply.
Of these, 1,756 did not go to prison & no one received maximum sentence
Data provided is from 2007 – 2010 and does not vary much year to year
In 2010, 12,175 people sentenced for simple possession of Class A drugs
Of these, only 779 (less than 10%) were sent to prison. Full reasons for prison not given, but suspects these had a long record and other crimes
Of these, only 2 were given the maximum 7 year sentence.
No details given for the others, but suspects given option of rehab program



- 235 Hitchens questions how the relaxation of cannabis law enforcement was meant to free up police to pursue 'evil dealers', but the data shows convictions for supply of Class A drugs was more or less unchanged over past 4 years (2007 - 2010). Hitchens argues that the figures do not reflect the high level of cocaine consumption in Britain and high numbers of dealers & users
- 235b – Hitchens refers to lenient treatment of high profile people by the law.
238a Eg singer Peter Doherty, 21 Dec 2009 in court charged with driving and drug possession (had a wrap of crack) and home search had another 15 wraps – many prior offences, but only fined a total of 2,050 pounds!!
- A wrap of crack fell from his pocket leaving the court for which he was charged and tried in a magistrates court – Doherty gave many excuses for having the 'incidental' crack in his pocket and claimed to be a recovering heroin addict who was self funding sophisticated medical treatment a rehabilitation program. He was only fined 750 + 85 in costs!!
The district judge commented that this case demonstrated 1. drug offenders are not afraid of the law and 2. they are right not to be afraid.
- 238 Hitchens details how two very rich people (Hans Rausing and wife Eva) who were charged with possessing crack cocaine and heroin on 15 July 2008. More drugs were found in their homes. They were charged and released on bail, but on 29 July all charges were officially dropped and they were ordered to go to Charing Cross police station where they were 'cautioned'.
- 238b – Journalist Neil Sears wrote in Daily Mail on 30 July that while possession with intent to supply has a max 7 years in prison, having drugs with intention to supply has a potential life imprisonment – even if supply is to friends and relatives (without any profit) but in practice it is almost never imposed!!
239a Also claiming that since the downgrading of cannabis there is a good chance that being caught with a small amount of cocaine will get a caution.
- 239b Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair got attention for declaring middle class people snorting at parties were not above the law. Hitchen points out that this is far removed from the reality (eg Hans Rausing case)
- 240 Hitchens notes other celebrities who were treated leniently for cocaine use
Eg model Kate Moss (on line images of her snorting white powder) and eg singer George Michael in a public lavatory with cocaine and cannabis. Pleaded his charity work would be impacted and released with a caution.
Eg singer Amy Whitehouse footage with what appeared to be crack – but who died apparently from alcohol abuse
- 241 Hitchens poses the possibility that increasing use of alcohol by the young may be caused by the common use of other (illegal) drugs
- 242 Blank page

- 243 Hitchens recaps on the theme of the book – that Britain's drug lobby principal argument is false through and through!!
There is no war on drugs and never has been for many decades.
There is no prohibition or anything like it!
And never an allegedly excessive conservative persecution of drug users!



- 243 – Britain has had an unacknowledged drugs policy – a policy of accepting sale and use
244a of especially cannabis, but also heroin and cocaine.
Two features underpinning this policy
The almost universally accepted concept of ‘rehabilitation’ Applying various programs to those convicted or arrested drug users with a view they will wean off drugs. This goes against the principals of law and justice!
Suppliers can be jailed for periods of years – but users do not face any consequences!
And suppliers would not be operating if there were no users!
The idea of ‘rehabilitation’ is in contradiction of the idea that the law should punish possession of these drugs – in order to deter addiction. Queries the provision of legal substitute drugs in treatment – prolonging addiction.
- 244b – If drugs lead swiftly to addiction the law has just one opportunity to save the individual
246a from addiction. If the consequences of using and becoming addicted are so severe – impacting on families, etc – then “we are justified in using deterrent punishment to persuade the undecide not to risk ‘addiction”
- Deterrent punishment is primarily aimed at discouraging others who are considering committing the crime involved. Hitchens recommends severe punishment at first offence to be effective in reducing drug harms!
- 246a Hitchens exposes the folly of describing drug ‘addicts’ as hapless victims of ‘evil dealers’ instead of people seeking pleasure from taking drugs.
- 246b – Hitchens presents a letter written by police Superintendent John Snell to a woman
247a whose car was vandalised showing how the thinking of the police is sympathetic to the perpetrators of such crimes due to their drug use which is inevitably a result of their broken homes or miserable family background.
- It illustrates this contradiction in blaming ‘relative poverty’ and ‘evil dealers’ and ascribing no responsibility on the users of the drugs!!!
- Surely if ‘addiction’ is so inescapable once it has been contracted – why not prevent the ‘addiction’ in the first place???? Far from imposing penalties, the users are offered rehabilitation. And the authorities in some cases become suppliers of drugs free of charge.
- The point being that users are treated so sympathetically they reasonably conclude the authority does not disapprove of what they are doing. So they become ‘addicts’!
- 247b – In the book “Controversies on Drugs, policy and practice”: (2011) by Prof Neil
248 McKeganey there are 220,000 drug users undergoing ‘treatment’ in the UK and estimates 900 million pounds being spent each year on ‘treatment’ which is poorly managed and monitored by people with low expertise.
Much of the cost is for methadone programs and the more effective residential rehab centres are least often provided.
In Edinburgh there are now more deaths from methadone than heroin!
McKeganey also highlights the undesired consequence of drug use becoming more entrenched and injecting longer due to ‘safe injecting centres’.
- 249a The confusing messages of the government providing drugs and clean needles leads one to ask if the government should mount a campaign against itself as the principal “Evil Drug Dealer”!
Hitchens claims the government does not regard the drugs as evil but uses its rhetorical militancy towards dealers as a cover for its complaisance towards the users.
- 249b Hitchens reports on information available from Her Majesty’s Prison which shows almost no decline in needle sharing and frequent cannabis consumption with a small percentage using cocaine, crack and heroin.
Disappointingly funds for this ‘harm reduction’ are readily available.



- 250 Disappointingly groups promoting abstinence from drugs and stressing their illegality (eg National Drug Prevention Alliance) are poorly supported
- 250 In his book, Prof McKeganey concludes this is fundamentally a moral question about what sort of society we wish to have. He contends that pragmatism has been so influential in the drugs sphere that any moral argument on preventing use of illegal drugs is seen as a form of abuse!

THE DEMORALISATION OF BRITAIN

- 251 Hitchens claims the respectability of the drug decriminalisation campaign is due to the support of many grand, famous and established UK citizens especially in the 1967 cannabis manifesto.
- 251 Contrary to the opinion that responsible, conservative people have come around to the view of endorsing weaker drug laws, Hitchens claims that a formerly conservative establishment has been demoralised.
(for a more detailed discussion see his book "The Abolition of Britain").
- 251 Hitchens reflects on the demise of the British Conservative Party which embraced economic liberalism under Margaret Thatcher – and argues that this in turn encouraged political and social liberalism.
- 252 Hitchens refers to another book he has written called "The Cameron Delusion" which explains why people mistakenly thought Thatcher was 'right wing' and ultra conservative. The book also details how the British Labour Party abandoned its belief in trade unionism and has become the political arm of the new class of urban graduates who want to be liberated from the narrow confines of the suburbs and Protestant restraints of Puritanism
- 252 Hitchens further reflects on the machinations of political groups who overall were moving towards a view that the individual is sovereign. All the time, while voices opposed more liberal approaches to drug use, the Labour party gave an appearance of being resolute against liberalism but acted otherwise
- 253 A pivotal publication/pamphlet published by former Tory Cabinet Minister Peter Lilley assisted by the Social Market Foundation think tank was entitled "Common Sense on Cannabis: The Conservative Case for Change." (Summer 2001) with 'wearingly familiar arguments' such as:
Defeatism mixed with admission the law is not enforced. No connection is made between the non- enforcement and the failure of the law! Declaring that a change was taking place and already, many police were no longer prosecuting cannabis users. The argument suggests that the law is unenforceable as well as being indefensible (sheer defeatism without any explanation as to why!) ie arguing it is now evident the law needs to change.
Then another curious suggestion that conservatives should take a more defensible position of removal of legal penalties while not approving use
- 254 Hitchens points out the truth of the matter is the only reason for the existence of a law of this kind is a moral disapproval of the drug's effects.
If the law does not express disapproval what is its purpose??
Hitchens also points out that where in the past the law imposing restraint has been removed, then moral restraints to no engage, rather the result is no restraint at all. Eg abolition of 1915 alcohol licensing laws
Eg in current times by 2001 plenty of evidence of no restraint as laws relax
- 254b Peter Lilley's pamphlet falls into the trap of recognising a non-existent and unscientific distinction between hard drugs and soft drugs like cannabis.
Arguing that there should be different channels for supply of cannabis rather than drug dealers handling cannabis as well as illegal hard drugs



- 255 Hitchens points to the weaknesses in Peter Lilley's arguments around criminalising cannabis users and keeping them from hard drugs – when they are already dealing with criminals illegally selling cannabis and other drugs. Cannabis is no being “demonised”, but rather has been through a process of being sanitised and even beatified! By being reclassified as a ‘soft’ drug
- 256 Hitchens continues to debunk Peter Lilley's argument in his pamphlet. Esp in regard to potential punishments and maximum fines which are rarely imposed. Also misleading numbers relating to arrests for cannabis use.
- 257 Hitchens continues his critique of Peter Lilley's pamphlet where he uses descriptive language giving the impression that the penalties have been severe for cannabis use and that the laws are there to trap people. Also misleading is to suggest the growth in cannabis is a result of these laws ...Hitchens pointing out that if the laws were consistently applied then the use of cannabis might have been greatly reduced. The severe penalties described were never imposed!
- 258a One piece of truth in Peter Lilley's pamphlet – AFTER drawing his conclusions leading the reader to a different conclusion about application of the laws -ie that laws on cannabis were being enforced with diminishing enthusiasm, and proportion of people let off is growing to over half of all apprehensions. Also greater percentage being not guilty in the courts.
- 258b Hitchens despairs of the failure to properly debate the issue with the TRUTH. People prefer the option of failed ‘prohibition’ steering Britain away from punitive policy towards drugs without explicitly admitting this intention. A typical strategy in British politics for the elite to influence the beliefs of voting masses. WORSE it seems the elite believes its own propaganda!
- 259 Hitchens explores the reasons behind this dishonest kind of collective delusion. Due to radicalism of the 1960's many people now in power have had a history of experimentation in cannabis smoking that now prejudices influential people who are prejudiced, corrupted and embarrassed.
- 259 -
260 Hitchens suggests that these urban graduate professionals would be okay with their children experimenting with cannabis except that their careers would suffer if they were apprehended under the existing laws. This explains the common complaint that the law is evil because it ‘criminalises’ cannabis users!! As an example of this Hitchens refers to the death of a 15 year old at an unsupervised party at the home of Brian Dodgeon, a university lecturer. Not in a lower class rundown lawless district! A fashionable middle class district. The court case revealed many of the children were smoking cannabis and a few found other drugs on the property and shared ketamine and MDMA which caused the death of the 15 year old. Hitchens notes that if the stash of illegal drugs had not been found the use of cannabis seen as ‘normal’ would never been reported.
- 261 Hitchens sees the consequences of failure to sternly enforce the law established in 1971 (as pro drug campaigners claim they are) has led to A society more corrupt and demoralised than anyone could imagine This demoralisation is concentrated in well-off, articulate and influential layers of society which has influenced political and media attitudes. Eg many more families like Brian Dodgeon's – not yet found out! Such people are permissive to themselves and their children corrupted by the drug culture – furiously and self interestedly opposed to tightening of the law. Signs are also that the drug legalisation lobby are better organised!
- 262 On May 2002 Lord Bingham (former Lord Chief Justice) told the Spectator magazine he supported a Commons committee demanding a dramatic relaxation of Britain's drug laws. He endorsed the Runciman report and freeing up police resources when interviewed by the Daily Telegraph. On the same day the Church of England's Board for ‘Social Responsibility’ argued more or less the same thing.



- 262 Hitchens notes that prodrug liberalisers cleverly did not ask for drug law to be altered but supported/promoted the reclassification of cannabis as class C, free needle exchange and rehab programs for people on hard drugs.
- 263 House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee argued for 'downgrading' of several drugs and for hygienic 'shooting galleries' for heroin and no fear of arrest. Admitting to large scale drug taking is inevitable and aiming to reduce the harms. The defeatist direction continued arguing that young people would take drugs and will grow out of this passing phase – advocating education on harm minimisation rather than prosecuting.
The idea that effective prosecution might be a deterrent is not considered!!
Despite evidence that enforcement has reduced drunken driving, improved seat belt wearing and preventing smoking in public buildings!
- 264 Hitchens reports on how one dissenting voice on the Select Committee, MP Mrs Angela Watkinson, was included in the minutes but summarily “put and negated” without any vote. See page 264 for full text of objection!
- 265 While ensuring the Select Committee complied with international treaties, they did not recommend legalisation of drugs, but instead advised seeking international moves towards open legalisation and “regulation” – a fashionable new term used by pro drug campaigners suggesting a responsible regime.
Mrs Angela Watkinson alone proposed an amendment to that recommendation opposing the change due to the effects drugs have not just on the users but also on their families, friends and community.
(See page 265b for full text of amendment)
- 266 Mrs Angela Watkinson continued by declaring that “This is a policy of surrender and defeat.” She refers to successful schemes of enforcement in Sweden and New York with penalties which include mandatory drug treatment. (See page 265b for full text)
Hitchens applauds her minority report because it contains many arguments the British establishment has ignored or overridden for past 40 years!
- 267 Hitchens describes how Mrs Angela Watkinson deals with the red herring of “what about tobacco and alcohol” which are legal refuting that cannabis should be allowed when schizophrenia is proven to be associated with it.
Hitchens is disappointed that on a committee of 11 men and women, only one person represented a conservative view while 10 were ‘libertarian’
Hitchens is not surprised that Mrs Angela Watkinson refusal to vote on the report as a whole was never reported in the media – because there was no real desire for proper debate on principle – the only view reported was the agreed elite policy – hollowing out the law while pretending to uphold it.
- 268 Hitchens closes by quoting Barbara Wootton’s bold prediction that
“the laughable idealism of one generation” will “evolve into the accepted commonplace of the next”
Hitchens reflects on how unimaginable this prophecy would have been to his fellow countrymen (of a once Great Britain) going about their business on 26 February 1970 when a Cabinet meeting voted to call off the war on drugs, but to pretend it was still fighting it.... The pretence continues

The End
- 269 The Index provides key words in the book and gives page references if you want to backtrack and follow up any reference to organisation, person, key word or phrase.





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