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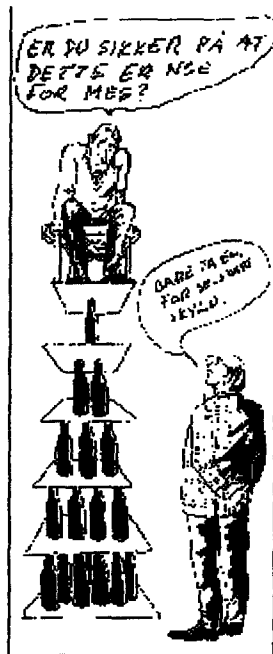
# Different views of elation

## Elation

"Elation" is a feeling of great or excessive joy, a fortification of emotions, a feeling of more or less strong excitement, a more or less distinct all-including sense of wellbeing, that is to say harmony between the body, the soul, and the surroundings. People have always aimed at this attractive state of mind, which could be said to resemble the intoxication caused by drugs.

## True and false means to achieve elation

To experience the state of elation, people have always utilized certain remedies; intoxicants. But we can make a clear distinction between true and false efforts, between natural stimulation of the senses and the use of chemicals - drugs. Here you may read more about how intoxicants stand in clear contrast to the real experience.



## Intoxicants and the problems of HIV-AIDS

The use of intoxicants has new dimensions today. Over the past few years there has been a growing awareness that the HIV-virus infects in ways closely connected to people's use of alcohol and narcotics. You can read more about this if you continue.

## Intoxicants and protection of the environment

Many people are very concerned about saving the world from industrial waste, degradation of the ozon-layer, reckless exploitation of natural resources, nuclear catastrophes and other kinds of environmental pollution. What role do the intoxicants play in the protection of our physical and social environment? And how important are they in relation to

people's efforts trying to bring about sustainable growth and international solidarity? Go on, and you can read more about this, too.

- *Are you sure this will work for me..?*
- *Just one to keep us company!*



*"Everybody needs to get high once in a while.*

*The big difference is how they choose to get there."*

**Vilhelm Eklund** Swedish poet

## Elation in a positive sense

A common feature of what we could term as valuable experiences of being elated is that they emerge in close connection to a certain activity, and/or in company with other people. Human beings are different, and so are our means to get our kicks. But if you ask mountaineers, parachutists, windsurfers, or even perhaps skateboarding youngsters, you will hear about strong feelings of excitement and freedom that arise during the activity, not to mention the unbelievable happiness they feel when they finally reach their goals or push their limits. Other activities that involve speed and excitement could thus also be termed as valuable means of achieving elation. Perhaps you remember how everyone in the audience seemed to be totally exhilarated the last time you went to a rock concert or a

sporting event? Of course the athletes and the artists do get high themselves, elated with victory or response from the audience. TV-pictures show scenes of olympic champions and victorious soccer-teams at the end of the cup season, overwhelmed by happiness.

## **Other (and perhaps less hard-knocking?) means to get high in a natural way**

The experience you get when you listen to a good record, go to a brilliant movie, or feel strong friendship, could more or less resemble the positive aspects of being intoxicated. Most people know falling in love as the most striking example, not to mention having sex (combined with love, care, knowledge, and condoms), but also the joy and exhaustion that develop through dance and other physical activities. Nature, art, the creative process and the joy of victory are only some of the innumerable ways get a natural high. A common feature of these experiences is their tendency to work from inside and through your body, taking possession of your senses, the nerves and feelings that exist inside you. As Marie Bergmann sings: "The light is within you". An absolute condition for these kicks to be as perfect as possible, that these natural means to get high should have the maximum opportunity to to work, is that our inner "receiver" is absolutely clear, that our senses are keen, that our brain is pure, and unaffected by chemicals.

## **"I can't get no satisfaction" - the growing demand for chemicals**



There are means to achieve elation that do not give you what we term as the real high. Trying these can give you a funny feeling of experiencing something, but in reality you are not. They present reality in an attractive way, but that does not necessarily mean that they represent the reality. What they really cause is a numbing of the senses, a poisoning and deterioration of the body and the nerve system, an emergence of hostility and quarreling between people who share common interests, and even accidents where both the affected and innocent people may get involved. The user will often suffer a hangover and other kinds of indisposition afterwards.

Addiction, passivity and apathy may be long-time consequences. That is why we determine these attempts, represented by alcohol, narcotics, tranquilizers and chemicals abuse, in the category of intoxicants. These intoxicants constitute a threath to the human body and health, to people's social environment and their ability to partake part in social relationships. The use of intoxicants thus weakens our ability to take part in the real world, and to experience the real high; they supress our senses and our spontaneity. The League Against Intoxicants will fight people's growing demand for chemicals to sustitute social relationships and

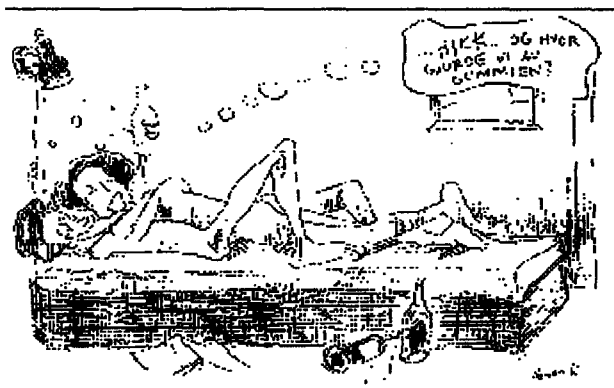
excitement. We will fight the suppression of people's opportunities to experience the real high, and we will fight the suppressors, who make money from the production and distribution of intoxicants. In order to succeed, we need to extend our numbers. Do you want to join us? Please contact The League Against Intoxicants for further information.

## HIV-AIDS, intoxicants and preventive work

### Getting the infection

As far as this issue is concerned, there are in actuality only two ways to be infected by the HIV-virus. The danger is confined to unprotected sexual contact and use of infected syringe needles. Infection spread through blood transmissions do not longer occur in Norway, due to strict and successful methods of control. However, children can catch the virus before or during birth if the mother is already infected.

### High-risk groups?

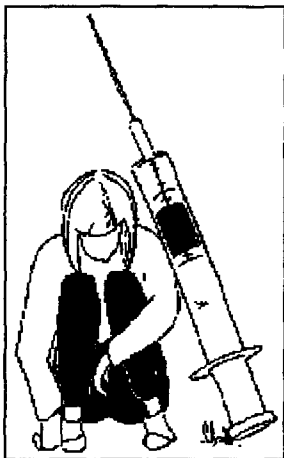


*- and where did we put the rubber thing?*

Until recently, needle addicts and bisexual/homosexual males were regarded as especially vulnerable to infection. This is still the situation. However, it is now confirmed that of the Norwegians infected by HIV during 1989 and the first half of 1990, one third got the infection through heterosexual contact (sexual contact between people of the opposite sexes). These figures show that we all have to act with care, also people belonging to groups that have so far been termed "low-risk". We also know that transmission of venereal diseases are likely to take place in situations where sex is connected to alcohol. These facts should prove that work to prevent HIV-AIDS, and awareness of the danger of infection has to be an issue of great importance to everybody, regardless of the use of drugs or

sexual habits.

## Preventive work aimed at high-risk groups



Preventing of drug-related HIV-transmission in Norway has mainly been targeted on making the users stop sharing their needles. This could be an effective strategy, provided the distribution of free, disposable needles is combined with offers of help. However, the League Against Intoxicants does not support the stationing of needle dispensers.

Likewise, in the same manner, offers of (medical) treatment could have a HIV-preventive effect. Knowing that round-the-hour treatment facilities are available for 300-500 addicts in our institutions (figures from 1990), we realize that the effect is somewhat small. The same year, the Norwegian National Institute for Research on Alcohol and Narcotics estimated the number of junkies to 4000-5000. The number of people being regular addicts, or having once experimented with injected drugs, was calculated to about 10.000. It is further estimated that between 20.000 and 25.000 people will have used hemp (cannabis-related products) in course of the last fortnight. However, it is pleasing to note that the actual use of narcotics has decreased with 60 percent since 1984 for people aged less than 20. Maybe this is a result of the information programmes against HIV and AIDS? Compared to early scenarios, the figures show that the number of needle addicts grow slower than expected.

## Preventive work directed strictly towards the use of narcotics

With the HIV-perspective in mind, it is obvious that a main issue must be to prevent people from experimenting with and becoming addicted to drugs. The logic is simple: an increase in the number of users will also lead to an increase among the users of injected drugs. This means that more people will be in a position vulnerable to HIV-infection. This is the main reason why it is so important to stop the use and distribution of illegal drugs, and to fight the acceptance of drug use promoted by different ideologies.

The police and the customs authorities of Norway work hard to prevent both drugs from being imported and distributed. Norwegian authorities have mobilised immense resources to control these problems. The League Against Intoxicants sees the next step as being the carrying out of policies that aim to reduce the demand for drugs. The political authorities must also undertake actions to support and maintain a negative attitude towards drugs, an attitude that the majority of the people already seems to possess.

There are thus reasons to put forward a strong warning against the closing of municipal leisure activities centres which is now taking place all over the country. There are also motives to ask for real alternative offers of leisure activities for young people, where intoxicants are deemed as unnecessary. Between 1985 and 1989 one third of the municipal leisure centres or "youth clubs" in Norway were shut down. Commercial restaurants and discoteques have taken over their position as a meeting-place for young people, and alcohol is distributed on a legal basis. As the police have on several occasions found drugs in or closely related to restaurants, there are reasons to believe that illegal drugs also have a position among these establishments.

Municipal employees, connected to the social services and engaged in problems concerned juvenile delinquency and the use of drugs among young people, have been of great importance as preventive workers in several areas. Their work has meant a great deal to the hundreds and thousands of young people headed for a life in the wrong direction, but who were given proper guidance and help in time. Help and treatment for needle addicts has also been provided by the state. However, these organizations are now faced with financial reduction, and politicians have been forced to shut down several institutions. The League Against Intoxicants fears that a short-sighted wish to save money will lead to a severe turn for the worse in densely populated areas, including an increase in use of narcotics, the use of needles, the danger of HIV-infection, the number of AIDS-infected people, and people in general need of care. In a situation like this, institutions for social- and medical care will need a considerable increase in financial support and other resources. The expenses could easily be so enormous that neither the government, local authorities or people in general could possibly manage meet them.



***Fight cannabis!***

## **Alcohol, sexuality, contraceptives and HIV**

In most cases the HIV-virus is transmitted through sexual contact. This gives a different aspect of the changes in attitudes towards sexual behaviour that have taken place during the last 25 years. However, we should maintain the notion of sexuality as a beautiful gift, an opinion which also constitutes the starting-point for the medical authorities. This is the main reason why the necessity of the use of condoms has been stressed in the request for safer sex.

A recent analysis shows that after the campaigns against HIV-AIDS, a somewhat greater share of young people now use condoms during their first sexual intercourse. In a group of people aged 17-19, 42.3 percent stated that they had used a condom the first time they had sexual intercourse. (Traeen and Kraft 1988). Of course this is good news, but at the same time this means that still more than half of the entire group do not protect themselves in the same way. As many as 65.3 answered that they had been sober at the same event. The fact that so many decide to keep their consciousness clear in this particular situation should be considered as a step forward, and probably also an improvement of the practice common to their parents' generation, at the same age. However, 34.7 percent of the respondents stated that they had been intoxicated during their sexual debut. Under these circumstances the tendency for indiscretion and inability of protection will increase.

Questions of particular interest must be to find out whether there is an increase in the tendency for casual sex (sexual intercourse between people the first night they meet), if use of condoms is widespread in these situations, and whether (and to which extent) use of alcohol is involved. In the analysis mentioned above, 41.8 percent of those who were sexually active, stated that they had sometime engaged in sexual intercourse with a person they had met for the first time the same night. Out of these only 27.4 percent of the male respondents and 23.3 percent of the females stated that they had used condoms the last time they had engaged in casual sex. Out of the same respondents 83.1 percent of the males and 74.4 of the females quoted that they were intoxicated at the event.



These figures, common sense and knowledge kept in mind, show that alcohol may be an important contributory factor in relation to casual sex and the failure of safe sex through use of condoms. Approximately two thirds of HIV-infected Norwegians have caught the disease during trips abroad, in most cases to areas where the HIV-infection is much more prevalent than in Norway.

Young people are especially eager travellers, and they are also frequent visitors of places where drinking habits and

attitudes towards alcohol are somewhat different from those of their home country. Norwegians also have a tendency to drink more abroad than they usually would have done at home. These reasons should be strong enough to make you take extra precautions when you go abroad. This can partly be achieved if you avoid casual sex with partners whom you do not know, provide for condoms and by stay sober.

## Reduce the consumption of alcohol - prevent the expansion of HIV

Our bold assertion follows: If people were willing to reduce their consumption of alcohol, the tendency toward potentially dangerous sexual behaviour would decrease. The same process would probably reduce both the adding to the lines of addicts and the danger of HIV-infection to a certain extent. Nevertheless, this would only be a part of the solution. The League Against Intoxicants are fed up with the fact that the authorities, the police and ordinary people refuse to face the importance of an alcohol policy. Should not public health, our social welfare and the set of problems concerning HIV be given priority over business? Our traditional double moral attitude towards alcohol causes loud cheers among the tourist business, hotels, restaurant, retailers and all enterprises engaged in the production and distribution of alcohol. They do all expand while leisure activities and clubs for young people are being shut down, while initiatives and enterprises instituted to prevent drug abuse are being closed, and while the medical authorities despair. The time has come to realize that an active alcohol policy is of vital importance to the AIDS-preventive programme.



- Should we try this bedroom, sweety?



- \*HUP\*

## **Alcohol - a question concerning our environment**

Should alcohol as an environmental problem be mentioned when we speak of pollution? Is this a question of any importance to the fight against contamination of air and water, the deterioration of the ozone layer, the eradication of the rain forest and the expansion of the deserts? This question has not yet been taken into account by most organizations concerned with development of the third-world countries and environmental programmes. There are be strong reasons to take a closer look at this problem.

### **3-4 Hiroshima bombs over Europe annually**

Imagine a bulldozer driving night and day at an average of 80 km/h making a 100-yard reach. This picture describes the destruction of the rain forest, and should appear to be rather frightening. Then what kind of picture should we use to visualize alcohol-related problems compared to the bulldozer? Maybe as follows: Every year the death of 200.000 people in Europe is caused by alcohol. This resembles a severe nuclear accident in one of Europe's most densely populated areas. If this were to happen, more than a million people would die or get injured, like they now do in the annual alcohol catastrophe. Or we can compare the numbers to the effect of 3-4 Hiroshima bombs over Europe every year.

### **"Look to Norway..."**

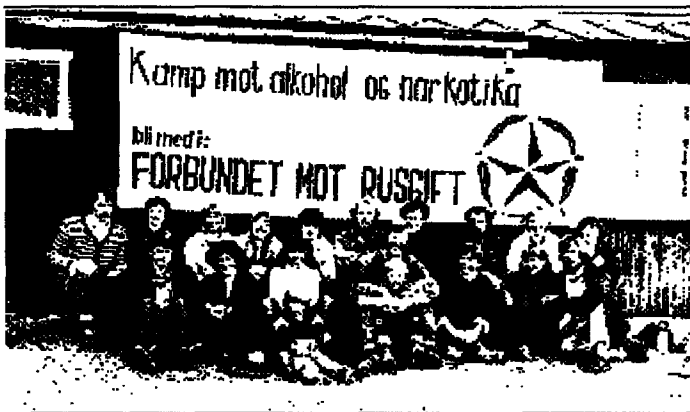
The Norwegians get their share of the world-wide problems related to alcohol consumption. The cost is computed to 50.000 years of life, lost every year by the Norwegian population. Alcohol has reduced the average life expectancy for Norwegian males with almost 2 years. Each year 1.100-1.700 people die because of drinking. Each year 60.000 injuries caused by intoxication are being reported, 100.000 people have to be taken to hospitals and 700.000 medical examinations are being performed because of alcohol usage. Every year about 150.000 people will feel the need to summon assistance because of other people's drunken behaviour. According to a questionnaire from 1984, 764.000 Norwegians stated that other people's drunkenness had spoiled at least one nice evening. It is rather surprising that these facts continue to be totally ignored by the mass media, nor considered as a set of serious problems by the organizations occupied with environmental problems. These organizations stand up against chemical pollution and poisonous ingredients in food. They do also

demand import restrictions on food treated with radioactive rays or toxics. These are all very important issues, but what about the issue of alcohol? In view of these strong environmental demands, how can we possibly tolerate the wilful pollution caused by alcohol?

## Alcohol in the third world

The scientists Walsh and Grant wrote in 1985: "The rapid increase in the third world's consumption of alcohol will probably be followed by an increase in alcohol-related problems, that will put a heavy weight on short social and economic resources". The scientist Kortteinen points at the marked increase in the production of alcohol in third-world countries, which probably will lead to dependency on imported grain from developed countries to secure the brewery enterprise. The development of the world as a whole is determined by that of the third world. This is where the rain forests are being destroyed and the deserts are growing. This is where the population growth takes place at an increasing rate. In the near future, this can be the place where the poor and suppressed people of the world will be able to fight for a decent share of the world's benefits and an improvement of their situation. Alcohol is an important contributory factor in the industrialized countries' efforts to maintain poverty and suppression in the third world. The export of drinking culture and alcohol products from the West should be regarded as a lot more than a common trade relationship. It is an effective way to keep the population of these countries down in apathy and passivity.

## Opposition to intoxicants



*Fight alcohol and narcotics: join the League Against Intoxicants!*

It is not possible to see reason as the main force behind global policy and development. The only chance to break through, is to mobilize enormous groups of people to claim their rights. The drinking culture of the Western world is one of the most serious obstacles to such a strong involvement. Today this culture also

functions as an export commodity to the third world, with exception of the Islamic countries and areas.

The Western drinking culture promotes easy solutions, which will appear as quite tempting to anybody needing an escape from reality. In the long run, this escape will inevitably lead to apathy. The fight against the expansion and use of alcohol and other intoxicants should therefore be an important contribution to the neverending work for environmental care, international justice and solidarity.

Alcohol and other intoxicants shall not be fought only because they are poisons that put our environment in danger, but also because they represent serious impediments to several national and international purposes. The support that this fight can gain could tell us whether it is possible to mobilize people for these purposes. There are thus strong reasons to look for more people to take interest in the fight against intoxicants in the future.



Maybe this could lead to a new era for the environmental organizations as well. The new ideas would be formulated on the basis of cooperation. Together we could work for a safe and secure environment, liberated from the threats and trouble caused by intoxicants. We could persuade people to quit their habit of escaping reality, make them go back to protect their children, our cultural life, our social environment, our economy and our future from the effects of alcohol and other environmental threats. Would you like to join us? Are you a member of some environmental organization, an organization working for solidarity with the third world, or some other forum where environmental questions are being discussed? Why not discuss this issue where you are, in your class, or with your friends? And why not get in contact with the League Against Intoxicants, an organization which has put the fight against expansion and use of intoxicants in the front rank?

## What is The League Against Intoxicants?

**The League Against Intoxicants** will work to reduce the injuries caused by alcohol, narcotics, tranquilizing medicaments.

**The League Against Intoxicants** makes an appeal to the sense of responsibility and solidarity among people. Awareness of personal drinking habits and consumption of alcohol is of vital importance to preventive work in general.

**The League Against Intoxicants** will work on public opinion to support an active

governmental policy dealing with alcohol and narcotics.

**The League Against Intoxicants** says yes to experiences of elation developed through natural stimulation of the senses, like high speed, excitement, creative work, nature, music, dance, art, body exercise, love, sex, friendship and solidarity.

**The League Against Intoxicants** says no to a chemicalization of people's emotional life, achieved by use of alcohol, narcotics and pills.

**The League Against Intoxicants** says no to the spreading and use of intoxicants that passivize, apathize and hamper individual development and growth.

**The League Against Intoxicants** will work for extended social engagement for ordinary people to fight the apathy and contamination constituted and maintained by all intoxicants.

**The League Against Intoxicants** takes its point of view seriously, and builds the work on total temperance from alcohol and other intoxicants. Everybody who agrees, are hereby being welcomed as members in The League Against Intoxicants. A personal standpoint and attitude is an effective way to fight both drinking pressure and the intoxicant culture.

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