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Qualitative research on ADIP :
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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

ON ADIP

- Final Report -



Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Min. des Affaires étrangères

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Angus Reid Group conducted focus groups with Canadian travellers who might be susceptible to becoming involved in drug-related activities while abroad and who were likely to have liberal attitudes toward the use of drugs.

- Participants perceived hard drugs and soft drugs very differently. While problems derived from activities related to hard drugs were numerous, people associated very few problems with the use of soft drugs. Most participants thought soft drugs has already been decriminalized and felt soft drugs should actually be legalized.
- Drug smuggling was seen as being the transportation of a large quantity of hard drugs strictly for financial gain. It is seen as a calculated risk and people feel that smugglers know all the risks and consequences related to the activity. There is very little sympathy for the smuggler and people do not see a need for any type of information on the risks and consequences of drug smuggling.
- People relate to the user of soft drugs and transportation of soft drugs for personal use into a foreign country is not seen as "smuggling". People feel the most useful communication messages would be targetted to the soft drug user who may be considering bringing drugs for personal use while travelling into a foreign country or when returning home. It was felt that people were not always aware of the risks and consequences of crossing a border or clearing customs with a small quantity of soft drugs.
- Mode of transportation appears to be an important consideration. People find airports and clearing customs to be more intimidating than border crossings. As such, it was felt that the risks of transporting drugs via one's car was not as great as bringing drugs through customs at the airport. Furthermore, the United States is not viewed as a foreign country and, as such, transporting small quantities of soft drugs into the States is not seen as a serious offence. Together, these data suggest that communications materials should focus on the individual transporting a small amount of soft drugs while travelling to the U.S. by car.

- Communications should also stress the fact that transportation of small amounts of soft drugs is considered to be drug smuggling in certain countries and that harsh penalties may result for such behaviour.
- People feel relatively safe transporting, buying and using drugs in countries where the drug laws appear lenient. People assume that all soft drug-related activities are fully legal and acceptable in certain countries such as Holland and Jamaica. Certain communication materials should stress the risks and consequences of transporting, buying and using drugs in these countries.
- People charged for drug-related offenses because of victimization or association do not receive a great amount of sympathy. They are generally viewed as being rather naïve and foolish. People do feel however, that the government must continue informing them of the dangers associated with certain behaviours when travelling. Any portrayal of the "innocent" offender should attempt to paint a picture of an average and intelligent "victim" so that people can more easily relate to it.
- By reviewing a number of communication aids, it became clear that participants prefer very direct and "hard" messages and visuals. They feel that the most effective way to discourage potential smugglers from taking risks is through shocking messages. It was also felt however, that messages had to be realistic and that too much exaggeration could jeopardize its credibility. Communication materials should reflect a balance between the potential "shock value" and the credibility of the messages.
- People also want more facts and more objective information. The personal accounts of Canadians held in foreign prisons on drug-related charges should be communicated as they are likely to be interesting, emotional and potentially shocking. People feel they would relate better to factual information and also feel that the impact and the level of recall would be greater.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The Anti-Drug Information Program (ADIP) is an information campaign of the federal government's drug strategy whose purpose is to sensitize Canadian travellers to the risks and consequences of becoming involved with illegal drugs in other countries. In accordance with its objectives, the ADIP has produced a wide range of communication tools including public-service announcements on radio, airlines, television, and in theatres, posters in airports, elevators, travel agencies and schools, as well as a widespread distribution of videos entitled *The Long Way Home* and *Gambit*.

The three target groups of the Anti-Drug Information Program are:

- 1) Mules / Drug Smugglers:** Travellers who are convinced by drug smugglers to carry drugs. These travellers are not normally in the "business" of drug-trafficking and are usually recruited in Canada to carry drugs for smugglers solely for financial gain.
- 2) Victims:** The Anti-Drug Information Program attempts to advise Canadian travellers of the dangers of getting into potentially risky situations (such as carrying packages for strangers or crossing international boundaries in the company of strangers). This target group consists of virtually all international travellers.
- 3) Drug Smugglers:** Travellers who underestimate the risks of smuggling drugs.

The Department of Foreign Affairs held focus groups in 1993 with Canadians travellers to assess the levels of awareness and concern about issues pertaining to drug-related activities abroad and to detect any misconceptions.

The Angus Reid Group had been asked to conduct focus groups with persons who might be susceptible to becoming involved in drug-related activities while abroad. Such persons are likely to have liberal attitudes toward the use of drugs.

The purposes of the study were to:

- discuss thought-processes and motivations of persons who are enticed into buying, using or smuggling drugs while travelling abroad;
- assess awareness of dangers, risks and consequences of getting involved with drugs among these travellers;
- assess awareness of level of assistance available from the Government of Canada to Canadians arrested for using or carrying drugs;
- assess familiarity with the ADIP;
- discuss views concerning the ADIP;
- solicit input from participants in developing future communications materials.

The Angus Reid Group conducted four focus groups: two in Montreal (in French) and two in Toronto (in English). The Toronto groups were conducted March 12, 1996 whereas the Montreal groups were conducted on March 14, 1996. Gérald Grisé moderated all the groups. (See Appendix I for Moderator's Guides).

Participants consisted of people who had travelled to a Florida / California / Hawaii / Mexican / Caribbean / Latin American / Asian / European vacation destination in the past two years. Groups were segmented according to age and education, and all groups included an equal number of men and women.

Toronto	Montreal
Group 1	Group 1
18 to 29 years old	18 to 29 years old
Some post-secondary education	No post-secondary education
Group 2	Group 2
30 years old and over	30 years old and over
No post-secondary education	Some post-secondary education

For all groups, five questions on the morality of drug use were asked in the screening questionnaire (see Appendix 2). These questions included:

- concern about drug use;
- views as to whether marijuana use is as acceptable / less acceptable than drinking alcohol;
- concern about marijuana use by other people;
- attitude toward marijuana use by travellers in other countries where the drug laws are lenient;
- favour/oppose legalization of marijuana.

Persons who indicated favourable attitude toward marijuana use were asked to participate. It was felt that these individuals would either be more susceptible to becoming involved in a situation involving drugs or would understand the mindset of persons who would get involved.

FINDINGS

All focus groups were conducted with 9 participants with the exception of the first Toronto group which only had 8. In each group, participants introduced themselves after which discussion on drug use and drug smuggling took place in order to provide information on people's mindset. The second part of the group focused on communication strategies and participants were asked what an advertising or awareness campaign should consist of. The level of awareness of ADIP materials was measured prior to actually showing them some of the materials. Participants were then showed posters, brochures and the 90-second version of *Gambit*. The order between posters and brochures alternated between each group whereas the video was kept for last in all groups. Toronto participants were shown English versions of all materials whereas Montreal focused on their French version. English posters and the English video were also presented in Montreal as most participants appeared to be fluently bilingual.

Travel Behaviour

Participants in the first and younger group in Toronto had travelled to various destinations including Panama, Mexico, Italy, South East Asia, France, Japan, Australia, Germany, North Africa and the United States. Only two participants had limited their travelling to the United States and in both cases they had been to Florida in the past two years.

In the second and older Toronto group, 3 out of 9 participants had only been to Florida in the past two years. Foreign destinations included Jamaica and Costa Rica, Central America, Sweden, Italy, the U.K., Guyana and Trinidad.

Destinations in the Montreal groups were much more limited with 3 participants in the first group having been only to Florida. Other destinations travelled to by these younger participants were limited to Haiti, Panama, Columbia and Cuba.

In the older Montreal group, clearly 7 of the 9 participants had travelled to Florida in the past two years. However, only two of them had not travelled to another country as well. Destinations only included Jamaica, Mexico, Europe and China. Contrary to all other groups in which all trips were for recreational purposes, the two participants who had travelled to France and China did so for business purposes.

Drug Use - Understanding The Mindset

Discussion on drug use clearly demonstrated that a number of soft drug users were present in all groups. As expected, the number of admitted drug users was considerably higher in the younger groups. In the older groups, most participants had smoked marijuana or hashish when they were younger and slightly less than half clearly indicated that they continue using it on occasion.

When asked how concerned they were with the problem of drug use, participants in all groups insisted that a distinction be made between soft drugs and hard ones. People were much less worried about soft drugs and most concerns expressed related to hard drugs. Problems associated with hard drugs included addiction, abuse, potential overdoses, health concerns and a range of issues associated with the underworld and organized crime. Its power of addiction was viewed as creating financial problems for many users and consequently forcing people into a life of crime. People were very concerned about its accessibility to children and this concern was also expressed for soft drugs.

Concern about the use of soft drugs was very limited and its accessibility to children and youngsters was viewed as the primary problem. A few participants were also concerned with cases of abuse and provided examples of a few "pot-heads" and how they became dysfunctional in society. Concern was also expressed about the high level of use of medications, the large amount of people abusing them and their overall costs to our governments.

Most participants felt that marijuana and hashish were comparable to alcohol although many also felt that they were less harmful. People generally viewed soft drugs as being less aggressive than alcohol. It was viewed that soft drug use generally leads to less violent behaviour than alcohol as it is used mainly for rest and relaxation. Soft drugs actually calm you down and provide an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of life. "Drugs are mellow whereas alcohol is rowdy." It does not appear to create as many social problems as alcohol and was generally viewed as being less harmful for society. Drinking and driving was often provided as an example illustrating the fact that marijuana is less of a concern than alcohol.

People therefore used drugs to relax, to get a "buzz" or simply as a right of passage while giving in to peer pressure. Smoking marijuana allowed people to "chill out", "experience other realms", "get away from it all". It was viewed a social activity and a lifestyle, and many stressed its positive medicinal effects. It was also viewed as being less addictive than coffee,

nicotine and alcohol. Many respondents insisted that smoking marijuana was less harmful than smoking tobacco and was not as addictive.

Most respondents were under the impression that marijuana was already decriminalized. Decriminalization was also very confusing to some participants as they wondered if only possession was allowed, how it was affected by quantity, how possession could be permitted while selling it could constitute a crime. Although almost all participants were in favour of decriminalizing marijuana, many went a step further and felt that it should be fully legalized. Roughly half the participants in Toronto felt marijuana should be legalized and slightly more than half the people in Montreal felt this way. Age did not appear to be a big factor as these proportions were very similar in both age groups in both cities. Only one participant in the second Toronto group was adamantly opposed to both decriminalization and legalisation.

Legalisation of marijuana was viewed as solving many problems and as an opportunity for government revenue. Full legalisation would allow the government to charge and collect taxes on its sell, to control its availability to children and youngsters, to control its quality ensuring that no unwanted or dangerous chemicals were added, and to save on policing and other justice related expenditures. Legalisation was also viewed as a potential way of boosting tourism and Amsterdam was provided as an example. In Montreal, concern with organized crime appeared common and legalizing soft drugs was viewed as a good way to reduce the "black market" and potentially hurt criminals financially.

Drug Smuggling - Understanding The Mindset

Some participants readily admitted using drugs in foreign countries. In the first Toronto group where participants appeared more open than in any other group, 3 participants had smoked drugs in the United States; although 2 of the 3 had brought drugs from home, all 3 had actually purchased drugs while in the U.S. One participant had intended on crossing the Mexico border with his drugs but changed his mind at the very last minute and disposed of his drugs. In the older Toronto group, one participant had been to Jamaica four times in the past two years and clearly smoked drugs while he was there. He suggested there were ways to bring drugs home with the guarantee of not getting caught. One semi-retired participant in the second Montreal group admitted that he regularly smoked pot when visiting his condo in Florida.

Participants stated that they and other people used drugs when travelling in other countries for the same reasons they used them at home: pleasure and relaxation. However, drugs were sometimes used when travelling in countries where the drug laws are lenient simply because drugs were more readily available and there was less risk of getting caught when in countries where soft drugs were permitted. Some participants also felt it was a novelty, a great experience and that smoking drugs was simply done to be able to say that they had smoked in that particular country. Jamaica and Amsterdam were the most common countries mentioned.

The risks and consequences of smoking, buying or transporting drugs in other countries were not always well understood. Many participants weighted the risk of transporting drugs into the States with the risk of buying some once in the States. Most felt that the consequences of getting caught at the border with soft drugs were more severe than getting caught purchasing some in the States. People clearly do not like buying drugs from complete strangers particularly in other countries and are concerned for their personal safety when dealing with a foreign and unknown drug trafficker. The person selling the drugs could try to "rip you off", could pull a gun on you, or could try to sell you contaminated products or very lousy drugs. In all groups, people were more concerned with their personal safety and with the quality of the drugs purchased than with the risk of getting caught.

A few respondents from Montreal were nevertheless concerned with the risk of getting caught. Admitting that they did not always know the laws in foreign countries, they were somewhat concerned with the possibility of dealing with under-cover police. They remained however, more concerned with their personal safety than with the risk of getting caught.

In regards to transportation and smuggling, most participants knew that if they were caught, the consequences would be very severe. However, transporting one's personal drugs and smuggling were viewed as being dramatically different. People did not consider transporting a gram of hashish or a few joints as "smuggling", and generally perceived smuggling as being the transportation of large quantities of drugs (usually hard drugs) for the purpose of making money. Transportation of personal drugs was not viewed as seriously as drug smuggling particularly when only crossing into the States. In fact, the United States was hardly considered a foreign country and some people did not seem too concerned with the risks of transporting drugs into the U.S.

Mode of transportation appeared to be a key factor in deciding whether or not to transport drugs. Those travelling by car were more likely to carry drugs than those travelling by plane. In fact, all the participants who admitted crossing into the States with drugs were

driving. Checking through customs with drugs was viewed as being a much higher risk than driving across the border. A car offered more hiding places and airports appear somewhat intimidating.

Although no one admitted transporting drugs into any other country than the United States, some seem to think that transporting them into the States by car is a very low-risk venture. There is a perception that the quantity and type of drugs is an important factor and that getting caught with a few joints of marijuana would not be taken very seriously. Some admitted that the consequences of getting caught were not well known and felt that the laws were potentially different in different states. Others felt ignorant about the law when it came to quantity and felt a need for more information. That being said, a few participants would seriously consider transporting small amounts of soft drugs when crossing the Canada-U.S. border by car and perceive the risks of doing so as being quite low and the consequences if caught as not being all that severe. Such was not the case for hard drugs, large amounts of soft drugs, other countries or trips made by plane.

Drug smuggling on the other hand was viewed as a very serious offence. Participants felt that the main reason someone would be willing to take such a risk was for the money. Smuggling was viewed as a calculated risk and it was believed that all smugglers are fully aware of the risks and consequences of transporting large amounts of drugs. Nobody considered transporting drugs for personal use as smuggling and smuggling was viewed mainly as a business transaction.

When asked why people would take such a risk, all participants mentioned financial gains. A few also felt that some smugglers may be doing it for the thrill, the adventure, the risk and the excitement. Not one single participant admitted he or she would consider taking such a risk and, in fact, thought that those who did were "stupid".

Levels Of Assistance

When asked what kind of assistance is available to Canadian travellers who are arrested for drug-related offences in other countries, participants were quick to mention that it depended on which country we were referring to. In other words, it was felt that the Canadian government's power, influence and ability to assist were directly dependent on the country in question (i.e. China, Cuba or Panama vs the United States, France, or the UK). Furthermore, people did not see a difference in our government's ability to assist based on different types of crime. Governments could intervene as easily in drug-related offences as in many other types of offences.

Assistance available to Canadian travellers was generally viewed as information from the consulate and possibly providing a lawyer.

Communications And Advertising

It was generally felt that people know the risks and consequences associated with using drugs, buying drugs, transporting drugs and smuggling drugs when travelling in foreign countries. Many participants felt that information was not necessary given the fact that drugs are illegal in Canada. "If it's not allowed here, you shouldn't assume it's allowed elsewhere." A massive information campaign was viewed as becoming particularly important should Canada eventually decriminalize or legalize marijuana. Then people would have to be constantly informed that although it is allowed here, it is not necessarily allowed elsewhere. But given the current context, people felt that everyone knew of the dangers of dealing with drugs both here and when travelling to foreign countries.

It was felt that drug smugglers, those who transport large quantities of usually hard drugs for financial gains, are definitely aware of the risks and consequences and that very little information could be effective. Risks and consequences of dealing with hard drugs or with large quantities of drugs are usually well known even if people may not know the severity of a potential sentence or the exact conditions of their correctional systems. What was less known were the consequences of being caught smoking, buying or transporting small quantities of soft drugs.

Participants were mainly concerned with the consequences of transporting small quantities of drugs particularly to the States. They were also concerned with the consequences of getting caught buying or smoking drugs in countries where the drug laws are lenient. It was therefore felt that very little could be communicated to discourage smugglers from taking the risk but that the average person could be made more aware of the risks and consequences of dealing with small quantities of soft drugs. For instance, people felt that any communication strategy should focus on the individual carrying a few joints of marijuana for personal use, as opposed to the one transporting a few kilos of heroin for major financial gain. People clearly do not identify themselves with "high-rolling" smugglers but many did relate as users of soft drugs.

It was suggested that any advertising campaign should focus on informing people about the dangers of transporting drugs, even a small quantity of soft ones. For instance, it should be stressed that crossing into certain countries with a few joints is considered drug smuggling regardless of the type and quantity of drugs, and can result in some very harsh penalties.

Many participants in both Toronto and Montreal insisted that information on the laws and regulations of different countries be made readily available. Some suggested a 1-800 number which could be automated and which would provide all the pertinent information on drug laws, risks and consequences for all countries. It could be menu driven and the caller would simply let the system know which country or countries they are planning on visiting.

Alternatively, it was felt that the 1-800 number could identify the various sources of information and many felt that travel agencies should have some responsibility in informing its clients of the dangers and consequences of drug use in specific countries. It was also suggested that diplomatic efforts be made to encourage countries to place warning signs or billboards at border crossings as a reminder to all travellers of the country's laws and regulation with respect to drugs. People therefore wanted to know the drug laws of various countries and particularly what would happen to them if they got caught with a few joints or a gram of hashish in those countries.

It was generally felt that the best way of discouraging people from taking the risk was to provide true life accounts of actual cases. Participants, even in Montreal, were quick to point to the well-known movie "Midnight Express" as communicating a very effective message. People want to know the circumstances of those hundreds of Canadians currently in foreign prisons for drug-related offences. They felt these stories would provide the best information possible on the risks, consequences, legal problems and laws in specific countries. Knowing all the circumstances in each case as well as the specific details of their sentences could discourage people from taking unnecessary risks.

People also wanted to know what Canadians in foreign prisons had been charged with. The country, the type of drugs, and the quantity of drugs were viewed as essential pieces of information. Participants want to know if these cases are offences by smugglers or by small users. It should be noted once again that people do not associate to smugglers but many identify themselves with the small drug user. Providing the actual stories or statistics on how many got charged for what could be very effective if many are charged with "minor" drug offences but could have a negative effect if all of them were caught "smuggling".

Most participants insisted that any information campaign should be focused on the small user but they were also very concerned with those who were charged for involuntarily committing offences. Victimization, crime by association and mule scenarios were presented to participants for feedback and although many sympathised with them, a considerable number of participants felt the victims were "naïve" or "stupid". Anyone who would carry a bag for a stranger or anyone who would pick-up a

hitchhiker in a foreign country was viewed as doing something ridiculous. People felt that plenty of information warning people not to do this already existed. Messages at airports continuously remind people to keep their luggage in sight at all times.

Although many participants felt it would be like telling an adult not to get in a car with a stranger or not to accept candies from a stranger, more communication was viewed as potentially necessary. Information was also needed for countries where drug laws are considered lenient as people do not think of the risks of smoking drugs in Jamaica or Amsterdam for instance. The consequences of smoking, buying or transporting small quantities of soft drugs in the United States was particularly viewed as being necessary.

When discussing the type of information that should be communicated, people therefore felt that it should be geared to the small user and to those who would "foolishly" accept doing things with others or for others (i.e. victimization and association). It was felt that the government should not waste time and resources trying to convince smugglers of the risks and consequences of smuggling drugs as this was viewed as a calculated risk and people generally felt that smugglers were quite aware of all drug-related regulations. Some participants felt that the government had no business trying to convince people not to take risks for something that was already illegal here in Canada. However, the majority did feel that information was necessary but also felt that travel agencies and airlines should share some responsibility in informing their clients about the dangers of dealing with drugs. It was also suggested that the government look at what other countries are communicating to their citizens.

Any information campaign should target travellers. Participants did not want a general campaign addressed to everyone as this was deemed somewhat useless and very expensive. People suggested pamphlets or brochures that would warn and remind travellers of the risks of using drugs in foreign countries. It was suggested that these be included with airline tickets, with information provided by travel agencies and with Passport documentation.

Anti-Drug Information Program

When asked if they had seen, heard or read anything or any materials aimed at discouraging people from taking the risk of transporting drugs across borders, people identified broadcast announcements in airports, reading materials in aeroplanes, the Customs' form "I Declare", some radio ads and some general materials found in travel agencies. One participant in Toronto recalled a radio ad from ADIP whereas one young female participant had recently seen the *Gambit* video at the cinema.

Posters

Toronto participants were shown the poster "*Room With A View*" whereas Montreal participants were shown its French version "*Dans L'eau Chaude*". Of all materials shown to participants, the poster was clearly rated the poorest. Participants questioned the visual and felt it offered a very pleasant and relaxing view. Some had not noticed the prison bars and many felt that it looked like a regular tourism advertisement. It was felt that the visual would not capture anyone's attention as many assumed it would be an ad for a Club Med or Greenpeace or something of that nature.

The main criticism of the poster was that it was not shocking enough. In fact, such a nice view from prison insinuated that the prison conditions were very pleasant. People felt a much colder image would be more effective. As one woman said, the picture should have been taken looking into the prison instead of onto the beach. The image projected by the poster was difficult to relate to drug use and many simply felt that it gave them the urge to take a vacation. If placed at travel agencies or in airports, the ad would simply blend in with various travel ads.

People felt the most effective image would need to shock viewers. Interestingly, people in all groups commented that the ad should have some red in it as it is usually associated with either "stop" or "danger". The ad needs to be more affirmative and shocking. Many participants suggested a picture of armed custom agents with a gun to someone's head. It was felt that the picture should scare people and in itself should remind people of the dangers of using and transporting drugs. Some also felt that it should focus on the small user and could have a picture of a joint stating "a single joint is smuggling - have you checked your pockets lately". The intent is to remind those that could have forgotten they had a joint on them or in their luggage. It was felt the visual alone should be a sufficient reminder as most people would not bother to read the ad.

In Montreal, most respondents preferred the English version to the French and found it to be more humorous. "Dans l'eau chaude" was often seen as a direct translation from English as it is not commonly used in French. Participants in Montreal felt "Room With A View" related much better to the visual than "Dans l'eau chaude".

In both the English and the French versions, the text itself was also viewed as lacking shock value. The fact that over 300 Canadians are currently serving drug-related sentences abroad was viewed as being very minor. Most participants viewed this as saying there were very few. It was suggested that using "hundreds of Canadians" instead of specifying only 300 would make a bigger impact. Many also suggested that a visual of a person in a prison with a text providing facts about that individual's story would make a bigger impact and would be a very interesting read. Participants clearly want more information on the 300 Canadians, where they are, what they did, why they were charged.

In Montreal, a second set of posters was presented to participants "*Voyagez sans payer*". Its rating did not fair much better than the first poster although participants did like the title as it was "catchy and cute". People were lead to read the text but generally felt that the text was particularly poor. Although the title encouraged you to read the ad, it was felt the ad was not worth reading. Once again, it was much too mild and had no shock value. As one participant phrased it, "the title is excellent as it makes you read the text but the text is such that you miss out on any payoff". People also disliked the yellow asterix and felt it was not necessary.

Pamphlets / Brochures

All participants were shown the bilingual brochure "*Be aware before you dare / Une personne avertie en vaut deux*" and Toronto participants were given the "*No Exit*" pamphlet with Montreal getting its French version "*Aller-Retour*". Of all materials presented, these brochures clearly rated the best. In fact, almost all participants found them informative and easy to read.

Be Aware Before You Dare / Une Personne Avertie En Vaut Deux

The information contained in this brochure was viewed very positively by most respondents. People mainly felt the fact that you could be charged by simply being with someone suspected of a crime as the most important piece of information. The limitations of consular assistance and the fact that alcohol is prohibited in most Muslim countries were also viewed as being very important. The information on prescription medication was also viewed as being critical as most participants had never considered potential problems with medication.

Although all participants liked the brochure and found it very informative, they still wanted information on those Canadians incarcerated in foreign prisons for drug-related offences. Furthermore, the most negative comments about the brochure related to the picture of the hand-print on the cover page. People clearly did not like the visual and felt it did not go well with the title, especially in Montreal. Some stated that the visual on the poster was even better than that one. Most felt that a shocking image would be more appropriate and some suggested the picture of a firing squad. Although a few additions were suggested in terms of information, the only major change people would like to see to it is the visual image.

Although most people clearly liked the brochure, they all preferred the *No Exit / Aller-Retour* one. This second brochure (shown first in half the groups) was unanimously preferred by all participants including the older group in both Montreal and Toronto.

No Exit / Aller-Retour

All participants loved this brochure. "Better than everything we've seen so far; very catchy; reads very easily; very informative; more direct than the others; nice visual and great colours; good for all age groups". The fact that this brochure was laid out on a single page was appreciated and people liked the flow of the information. The "Do's and Don't's" were to the point and very clear and people were happy to see some facts on Canadians in foreign prisons on drug-related charges. However, they generally felt that 324 cases were not many and suggested that information on fines and other sentences be included. People still

wanted more information mainly related to the type of offence committed (i.e. smuggling vs small quantities).

The statistics were also a little confusing for some and it was suggested that the facts be simpler to read and understand. Providing raw numbers was suggested as an alternative to percentages. People also questioned whether or not the United States allowed for arrangements for transfer to a Canadian prison given that 56% were incarcerated in the States and 53% were imprisoned on drug charges in countries where there are no arrangements for transfer to a Canadian prison. The only other change suggested was adding a 1-800 number for people who wanted more information or had questions.

Gambit Video

The 90-second version of Gambit was shown to all participants. Only the English version was shown in Toronto whereas Montreal participants viewed both the French and the English versions. The video was shown 2 to 3 times in each group and discussion took place after each showing.

Most participants clearly enjoyed the video. It was described as being very good, well done, very appealing and almost scary. Viewers stated that they liked it and would remember it for quite some time. As one Montreal participant pointed out, the greater the shock value, the greater the recall. He compared it to a Quebec television ad on responsible drinking in which a little girl's mother is killed in a car accident and the girl cries out for her. People still remember that ad very clearly.

The voice-over in the video was criticized by some participants mainly in Montreal where the majority of participants felt the voices were too "nerdish" and sounded like foreign French. "No one speaks like that in real life". The voices made it that much more difficult to relate to the video.

The drug switch from the male to the female character created some confusion among some participants and some did not understand what had taken place until they saw the video a second time. Others felt that the effect the switch created contributed greatly to the video's shock value and made it that much more interesting. The scene where the dealer slaps on the chess game was viewed as the best part of the video and all participants liked the way it was presented. The dealer's expression and actions say a lot and really help in making the situation look as real as possible. Some felt that the arrest could have been more dramatic, heavier and scarier.

Many participants in both Toronto and Montreal questioned the video's title. They simply did not know what it meant. A few participants also felt the video was too long although this perception was mainly related to the potential cost of airing a 90-second video. They felt that a good 30 seconds could easily be chopped without changing the message or the impact of the video to any considerable extent.

The biggest criticism of the video related to the fact that the people in the video were seen as being first time smugglers, but smugglers nevertheless. People had a very hard time relating to them or identifying with them. The video seemed to target the smuggler rather than the small user and people questioned spending money trying to convince smugglers to consider the risk and consequences of their actions. Once again, people felt the ad would have more impact if the offender had a small and personal quantity of soft drugs rather than a large quantity of hard drugs.

All participants insisted that they did it for the money and that they were aware of the risks and consequences of their actions. It was evident that they knew it was risky and illegal but chose to try their luck anyway. As such, people feel any information or awareness campaign aimed at smugglers is a waste of time and money. People foolish enough to take a calculated risk do not deserve special attention. Many participants questioned why the government would spend money for information or advertising targeted to smugglers or potential smugglers as it is felt that they are fully aware of the risks and consequences.

Conclusions, Suggestions And Recommendations

- It is clear that people question the need for information aimed at drug smugglers. People do not relate or identify themselves with smugglers and are more concerned with having information and advertising which are geared toward the small user and people who could be charged due to victimization or association.
- The government should attempt to raise awareness among those who are naïve and those who would not consider small amounts of soft drugs as being a significant offence rather than smugglers. A campaign aimed at the "little guy" would protect a much larger number of Canadians when compared to a campaign aimed at smugglers. Reference to drugs should also be focused on soft drugs and small quantities and not large quantities of hard drugs.

- It was felt that any campaign should be targeted to potential victims and youth. Focusing on younger people is viewed as prevention and many participants suggested getting the school boards and schools involved in a campaign. In fact, schools, colleges and CEGEPs, universities and youth hostels were viewed as very good places for an information campaign.
- People felt that personal accounts of Canadians in foreign prisons on drug-related charges represent the best objective information to use in a campaign. The stories would be a compelling read, would provide important information and would enhance awareness of the risks and consequences of drugs.
- It was also suggested that films like "Midnight Express" be subsidized if necessary and be aired more frequently. It was recommended that such films also be played as in-flight videos.
- Information campaigns should also focus on the element of risk. It was felt that if statistics could be provided on the total estimated number of smugglers or people transporting drugs compared to the number of people getting caught, people would have a better idea of the risk they would be taking.
- People also felt that information campaigns clearly showing how much a person has to lose would be more effective. Instead of showing people in difficult financial situations accepting to smuggle drugs for money, they could show regular people getting caught with small amounts and the impact criminal charges would have on their job, family and reputation.
- Others also felt that communications should focus on the length and conditions of potential sentences. Again, they referred to the 300 incarcerated offenders and felt that their real life stories should be communicated. Exaggeration must be avoided and objective facts and cases would have the most credibility and the most impact.

Perceptions/Misconceptions	Recommended Messages/Responses
<p>Drug smugglers are generally defined as people who transport large amounts of hard drugs into other countries for financial gain, fully knowing all risks and consequences of their actions. Transportation of soft drugs for personal use is not considered as "smuggling".</p>	<p>Drug smuggling is seen as a calculated risk and it is felt that any information targetted at "high rolling" smugglers is very difficult to relate to. Even first-time smugglers are difficult to relate to as smuggling is perceived to be a business decision based on all the necessary information.</p> <p>There is little sympathy for the smuggler and people do not feel a need for information targetted at the potential smuggler as it is felt that the risks and consequences are already well known.</p>
<p>People distinguish between hard and soft drugs and also feel that quantity is an important consideration. Smuggling is seen as crossing the border or clearing customs with a large quantity of hard drugs for financial gain.</p>	<p>People relate to the user of soft drugs. Transporting small/personal amounts of soft drugs into other countries or buying soft drugs in foreign countries is easier to relate to. Communication materials should focus on small quantities of soft drugs for personal use.</p> <p>Communications should also stress the fact that transportation of small amounts of drugs is considered as drug smuggling in certain countries and that very harsh penalties may apply.</p>
<p>Mode of transportation is an important consideration. People feel the risks of transporting drugs are greater when travelling by plane. Cars are perceived to offer more hiding places, to be less likely to be searched, and, hence, less risky.</p>	<p>Clearing customs in a foreign country is an important setting for communication materials. However, some materials should depict people travelling by car at border crossings.</p>
<p>The United States is hardly viewed as a foreign country. Many risks and consequences associated with transporting, buying or using drugs in foreign countries are not taken into account when travelling to the States. It is almost perceived to be an extension of Canada and people feel they are quite aware of U.S. laws and their penal system.</p>	<p>A particular focus should be placed on people travelling to the United States clearly emphasizing the consequences of getting caught when entering or leaving the States. The focus should be on people travelling to the States by car with small amounts of soft drugs. Communications should also emphasize the consequences of transporting even small amounts of drugs and should act as a reminder for people to check their luggage, pockets, glove compartment, etc.</p>

Perceptions/Misconceptions	Recommended Messages/Responses
<p>People feel relatively safe transporting, buying and using drugs in countries where the drug laws are lenient. People assume that all drug-related activities are fully legal and acceptable in certain countries such as Holland and Jamaica.</p>	<p>Certain communication materials should stress the risks and consequences of transporting, buying and using drugs in countries where drug laws are perceived to be very lenient. People are generally aware of the fact that you are not allowed to enter or leave the country with drugs but feel all drug-related activities within the country are fully legal.</p>
<p>People generally feel that the most effective way to discourage potential smugglers from taking risks is through shocking messages. Most of the aids presented to them were see as being too soft, particularly all visual executions.</p> <p>People want objective information and facts. Any exaggerated message puts into question the credibility of the communications.</p>	<p>Communication materials must reflect a balance between "shock value" and "credibility of the messages". The message has to be direct, to the point, scary, yet realistic and believable. More effective visuals could be developed by making them a little more shocking.</p> <p>Communications should present more facts. The personal accounts of Canadians held in foreign prisons on drug-related charges should be communicated as they are likely to be interesting, emotional and potentially shocking. People can relate better to factual information and feel that the level of recall would also be higher.</p>
<p>People are only partially sympathetic to those being charged for offenses committed by victimization or association. It is felt that these people are very naive and foolish.</p>	<p>Continue with communications aimed at increasing the level of awareness of the various ways an "innocent" person can become involved in drug-related offenses. The more the "victim" appears intelligent and informed, the more impact the message is bound to have. People must relate to the person being victimized.</p>

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