

# WORLD TRAFFIC IN DOPING SUBSTANCES

by  
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## Note to the reader from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA):

This worldwide research study, performed by Alessandro Donati, assembles information and data that may be used as the basis for an estimate of the total volume of traffic of doping substances on a world scale.

The report is indicative of the challenges facing the anti-doping movement—the lack of national laws in many countries and the failure to enforce existing laws in others, as well as the dearth of reliable information to accurately describe the problem and develop solutions. To WADA's knowledge, this study is the only attempt at quantifying the problem and identifying trends on an international level by pulling together into one report the information available on the recent history of the international trafficking of doping substances.

The picture painted by this ambitious study should sound the alarm to the international community, and particularly to those governments that have yet to commit to outlawing the manufacture, supply and possession of doping substances.

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## WORLD TRAFFIC IN DOPING SUBSTANCES

### 1. DOES EVERYONE KNOW WHAT DOPING IS?

The English word “doping” is used worldwide but, up to about twenty years ago, only athletes and sports experts were aware of its meaning <sup>1</sup>.

Then, year after year, as one case followed closely behind another and involved high-level athletes from different sports disciplines, everyone began to understand it. Doping scandals among sports stars have deeply influenced the dissemination of the term “*doping*” to the extent that, nowadays, if you were to ask 1,000 people “*do you know what doping is?*”, at least 990 of them would link it to sports and reply that it is a system used by athletes to artificially enhance their performances.

Everyone knows that doping is currently used by a relatively significant number of athletes in different sports disciplines. Most people, however, are not aware of the fact that this phenomenon originated outside the world of sport and now extends well beyond it. Two of the purposes of this critical overview of the doping phenomenon are to explain the essentials of its origin and its diverse destinations. Indeed, without this background, it would be impossible to have a comprehensive view of the ramifications and the social hazard that doping entails, and it would be impossible to implement the measures necessary, if not to defeat it, at least to check its development.

#### 1.1 The different origins of doping

Researchers created most of the pharmaceutical substances used for doping practices as treatments for specific diseases: such is the case for amphetamines, anabolic steroids, growth hormone or GH, erythropoietin hormone or EPO, other peptide hormones that stimulate endogenous testosterone production, and many other drugs.

Also, the doping process most used in sports, blood transfusion or blood doping, originated as an emergency treatment in the case of critical and copious bleeding or a critical reduction in red blood cells <sup>2</sup>.

There is also the case of particular stimulants and synthetic testosterone-based drugs – anabolic steroids – that were specifically created to support and increase the aggressiveness of German soldiers fighting, often in extremely stressful environments, in World War II. It is also well known that US pilots used stimulants. Obviously, these drugs were administered by military physicians <sup>3</sup>.

Only recently, and as a purely secondary phenomenon, researchers have modified molecules already known in the field of sports doping (for instance, anabolic steroids) so that they cannot be identified and, therefore, would be untraceable in doping tests. This is the case for the modified steroid THG, discovered on the occasion of the BALCO case <sup>4</sup>. Another case of modified anabolic steroids was brought to light by the

Canadian customs police, who stopped a Russian athlete. Also, the NAS Carabinieri – a unit of the Italian police particularly qualified in anti-doping investigations – recently intercepted boxes of a modified anabolic steroid coming from China in the hands of a criminal organization <sup>5</sup>.

## 1.2 The various destinations of doping

We have already mentioned experiments with drugs carried out, as far back as the 1940s, on soldiers. As we said, these were administered to provide both physical and mental support: on the one hand, they increased physical strength and endurance and, on the other, they lowered the perception of danger and enhanced self-awareness and a sense of belonging to the group <sup>6</sup>.

You will find further on in this overview evidence, supported by striking incidents, that doping among soldiers has never ceased. But the distinction between soldiers and other military or paramilitary corps such as policemen, gaolers or firemen is often slight; indeed, doping is widespread among these corps <sup>7</sup>.

Just as slight is the distinction between state police and various forms of private police organizations working as security personnel and bodyguards. All these aspects are extensively discussed further on <sup>8</sup>.

Doping among soldiers and policemen began in the 1940s and became increasingly widespread and progressively heavier and, therefore, more hazardous health-wise. Doping among body builders also has a long background: it began in the USA around 1950. However, while among soldiers the consumption of doping substances occurred only in specific periods of time and, in most cases, the dosage was relatively low, among body builders, who are driven by the irrepressible impulse to increase the size of their muscles, the dosage was significantly higher than the dosage for which these drugs had been tested in the medical field. One can easily imagine the dangerous combination of motivations triggered in a soldier who is also a determined body builder.

In the following paragraphs, we shall also discuss how, since the 1970s, cinema influenced, both deliberately and unconsciously, the dissemination of the body builder stereotype. Beginning in those years, doping has become increasingly widespread among actors who need to have a particularly good appearance, especially when the results have to be attained in the few months between casting and the first shoots. Progressively, doping spread to the theatre, to ballet, and even to fashion, so that now it is no longer restricted to actors but involves the whole show business milieu. Doping in sports, on the contrary, did not begin in a specific period but developed alongside sports. It is not necessary to go back to sports in Ancient Greece, with the fraud and the quest for magical potions that characterized a large part of the history of sports. We need only refer to the cases of doping that were brought to light as early as 1904, during the Saint Louis Olympic Games, even though there were no specific tests <sup>9</sup>.

From then on, new, increasingly sophisticated forms of doping were developed, closely connected to the development of sports performances, so that it is now impossible to separate and distinguish between the

effects of one factor (doping) from the values of the other factor (the operational capacity of athletes, coaches and the entire sports system).

Lastly, thanks to these four channels of dissemination – military, show business, body building and sports – pharmaceutical companies became aware, as of the 1970s, of a situation that was surprising and perverse but economically very profitable: a significant number of healthy subjects were willing to consume large quantities of drugs meant for the treatment of various diseases just to look better, although they were aware that, in so doing, they ran the risk of becoming unhealthy. With carefully studied production and distribution strategies on the borderline between legal and illegal practices, some pharmaceutical companies filled the market with huge quantities of drugs, mainly hormones, which were advertised in turn as adjuvant treatment for serious diseases, dietary supplements or wondrous anti-aging remedies. Such improper use of pharmaceutical substances, put into practice by the very industries that were more aware than anyone of these drugs' side effects, is the fifth and last destination stream.

### 1.3 Relationships between these five destination streams

We have already mentioned the loose connection between the use of anabolic steroids and stimulants among soldiers and the use of these same substances among athletes. Historians have observed that soldiers are often also athletes or people who pay particular attention to their physical structure: this is one of the reasons for the dissemination from soldiers to athletes to body builders. Those who consume doping substances, be they professional soldiers, soldiers involved in armed conflicts, policemen, bodyguards, body builders or athletes, often have in common gyms in which they train, coaches, doping substances, eating habits and an obsession with their physical condition <sup>10</sup>.

At the beginning of the 1970s, a number of Italo-American Mafia families who fully controlled the drugs traffic came upon a perverse but brilliant idea to set up a new illegal business with anabolic steroids: they financed the first films with actors who came from body building backgrounds. In this way, not only did they collect large amounts of money because these films were a great success worldwide, but they also promoted the image, at that time quite unusual and considered by many to be somewhat grotesque, of men with huge muscles <sup>11</sup>. Ever since, film actors, but also stars of the other branches of show business, have increasingly based their professional activity on a combination of physical training and anabolic hormones. So they too joined the above-mentioned categories and became part of the "great family" whose life is centred on gyms, heavy training, diets with high protein content and "supplements" of various types of hormones.

As hormones such as erythropoietin (EPO) and growth hormone (GH), which are very important in the treatment of serious diseases, became increasingly used for doping, an incredible, very complex black market – illustrated further on – developed, in which the destiny of sick people was perversely entangled with that of athletes.

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## 2. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DOPING AND DRUG USE?

If we were to address this question to drug consumers, they would typically answer that there is no substantial difference. On the contrary, those who revert to doping, especially if they belong to the sports milieu, answer just like sports executives that there is a difference and that it is very significant. Who is in the right?

Toxicologists, biochemists, physiologists, physicians, psychologists, each according to their particular analysis and classification methods, have provided sufficient elements to supply the correct answer. They have produced, among other things, tables with the classification of the dangerousness of these drugs which are used in several countries as basis for anti-drugs legislation and anti-doping regulations in the sports system. These tables show significant overlaps: we can see that amphetamines, stimulants, cocaine, heroin and cannabis are listed on both tables <sup>1</sup>. Moreover, in nearly all countries, the first four substances are classified as those with the greatest health hazard, not only on account of their toxic effects, but also because they are addictive, causing both physical and mental addiction.

Addiction is clearly the condition that, more than any other, implies risk and constraints for the person who has been consuming drugs for some time. The athlete and the “man of action” (policeman, actor or body builder), who are involved “only” in doping, perceive drug addicts as the antithesis of what they are. Sports executives who, naively or through calculated cynicism, blissfully organize symposia in which sport is put forward as the antithesis of drug use, consider the mere association of these two phenomena as disrespectful, even calumnious.

However, it is irrefutable that the extensive use of amphetamines, stimulants or cocaine over a long period causes serious addiction problems in all subjects; the effect is the same on athletes and body builders. Some may object that this line of reasoning is irrelevant, since amphetamines and stimulants were used for doping in the past and athletes who tested positive for cocaine did not use it to enhance their performance but for recreational purposes.

The answer to this type of objection comes, once again, from the scientific disciplines and is quite terrifying: both anabolic steroids and testosterone are highly addictive and, what is more, induce the use of other drugs and pharmaceutical substances (specifically amphetamines, stimulants, cocaine, etc.) as complements or compensation <sup>2</sup>.

Addictive effects similar to those of anabolic steroids have been observed for growth hormone, while scientific literature reports critical risks associated to EPO abuse by healthy subjects including, in the case of heavy, repeat dosage, serious impairment of the body's capacity to synthesize this hormone. In the case of EPO, it may not be entirely correct to talk of mental addiction (although the euphoric state of hyper-oxygenated subjects still needs to be investigated), but a physical or physiological addiction certainly exists <sup>3</sup>.



I have often been appointed by the judge as an expert in criminal investigations and, on such occasions, I have had the opportunity to read a large number of documents on raids and transcriptions of wire tapping, so I am sure, beyond any doubt, that subjects who consume anabolic hormones behave exactly as described in the scientific literature. Furthermore, very often these same subjects tend to associate abuse of anabolic steroids (or testosterone) to abuse of various types of narcotics <sup>4</sup>.

This line of thought may be concluded with the following observation: drug experts know that the use of heroine is steadily decreasing, while that of cocaine is increasing. This is not without consequences on a practical level: by consuming cocaine, just like ecstasy, amphetamines, and stimulants, consumers look for the euphoria that will enhance their communication capacity, make them more “brilliant”, and increase their nervous endurance to fatigue. If you think about it, these targets are not so different from those that people look for in doping, to the extent that, as mentioned earlier, most of these substances are also used in the field of sports or physical training.

Therefore, it is the concept of drug use that is changing; it is coming closer in many ways to the concept of doping. Research recently showed that 20% of builders use cocaine in order to increase their working hours and so earn more money, most of which will be handed over to drug dealers <sup>5</sup>.

## 2.1 Do drug dealers distinguish between doping and drug use?

No, for most dealers there is no difference. To prove this, it is a fact that, when the police seize illegal substances from dealers, they find substances for drug use and substances for doping <sup>6</sup>.

Leaving aside the production sites of opium and opium poppies, we can see that most of the drug routes controlled by the larger international criminal organizations overlap the doping routes; this aspect will be discussed in detail further on. Here, it is sufficient to mention that there are routes from Asia, the republics of the former Soviet Union, and Greece and Cyprus.

Briefly, dealers do not make a distinction but, most of all, it has been observed that consumers often use both types of substances and pharmaceutical products, at the same time or in successive periods <sup>7</sup>. Moreover, even the experts who produced the tables on which anti-drugs and anti-doping legislation and anti-doping rules are based agree that several substances are common to both categories and, lastly, science has shown that the main doping substances are addictive and lead to the consumption of other illicit substances.

The French website “L’étape” indicates a new form of anabolic steroid addiction whereby “*body builders try to compensate for impotence, which is side-effect of anabolic steroid use*” <sup>8</sup>.

In light of such connections, the most obvious answer is that the heterogeneous assortment of substances used for drug abuse and the assortment, also heterogeneous, of substances used for doping have quite a number of points in common; indeed many more points than heroine and cocaine or EPO and stimulants. Therefore, there is a varied assortment of substances, all of which present a significant health hazard and the

distribution of which is in the hands of criminal organizations that control international traffic. Such is the outlook from which the updating of existing criminal laws and sports regulations, or possible new laws, should be examined.

## 2.2 Public authorities don't seem to understand

Over the past five years, the World Drug Report <sup>9</sup> and most European countries, in their annual report on addictive substances, list only data concerning seizures of narcotic drugs, while there is no mention of pharmaceutical substances used for doping. Very few countries provide data on doping and the information is incomplete or insignificant, often imprecise and contradictory.

Annual reports produced by the *European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction* clearly indicate shortcomings and a lack of consistency observed in the national reports. The table below shows the main points presented in the 2004 report entitled "*State of Drug Addiction in the European Union and in Norway*" <sup>10</sup>.

The following features were taken into consideration for each of the 28 national reports sent to the centre:

- The number of pages, indicating the report's structure and level of investigation;
- References to doping, however unspecific – these were found in only four national reports;
- References to anabolic steroids – these were found in eight national reports, and this is already inconsistent with the previous data, but only five of these eight national reports provided information on illegal traffic and seizures;
- References to traffic and seizures of other hormones that can be used for doping – found in only one national report;
- No less than 20 national reports mention sports but do not indicate any connection with doping!

Several other inconsistencies appear in these national reports:

The Greek report indicates that, among young people, the use of steroids was found to be similar to that of cocaine (1.3% and 1.5% respectively) but there is no mention of possible seizures or an estimate of the illicit traffic.

The national reports from Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Romania mention sports as a means to counter the use of drugs and there is no mention of doping. Also in the Bulgarian report, sports are presented as a preventive to drug use; there is mention of doping, but the report also indicates that anabolic steroids are among the most available substances on the market. The Slovak report indicates that anabolic steroids are diffused mainly among the richer classes. The reports from Norway and Poland denounce the seriousness of anabolic steroid diffusion but, when they refer to sports, there is no connection between said diffusion and doping. Particularly striking is the only reference to doping found in the French report: "*Recent surveys have shown a significant diffusion of psychoactive substances among male and female subjects involved in training, without qualified assistance*".

Summary of the data presented in the various national reports; where data was found, the figure in brackets indicates the number of references; e.g. the Hungarian report refers 35 times to sports but the word “doping” does not appear even once.

N.	Countries that have sent in a report	Number of pages	References to doping	References to anabolic steroids	References to other hormones	References to sports
1	Austria	137	No	No	No	No
2	Belgium	139	Yes	Yes (1)	Yes (1)	Yes (3)
3	Cyprus	132	No	No	No	Yes (2)
4	Czech Republic	102	No	Yes (1)	No	Yes (1)
5	Denmark	101	No	Yes (2)	No	No
6	Estonia	116	No	No	No	Yes (1)
7	Finland	110	Yes (1)	No	No	No
8	France	111	Yes (1)	No	No	Yes (3)
9	Germany	146	No	No	No	Yes (6)
10	Greece	130	?	Yes	?	?
11	Hungary	96	No	No	No	Yes (35)
12	Ireland	133	No	No	No	Yes (15)
13	Italy	99	No	No	No	Yes (30)
14	Latvia	40	No	No	No	Yes (1)
15	Lithuania	67	No	No	No	Yes (1)
16	Luxembourg	100	No	No	No	Yes (9)
17	Malta	74	No	No	No	No
18	Netherlands	147	No	No	No	Yes (13)
19	Poland	84	No	Yes	No	Yes (7)
20	Portugal	64	No	No	No	Yes (7)
21	Slovakia	162	No	Yes (1)	No	Yes (13)
22	Slovenia	117	No	No	No	Yes (7)
23	Spain	71	No	No	No	No
24	Sweden	37	No	No	No	No
25	United Kingdom	103	No	No	No	Yes (3)
26	Norway	73	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	No	No
27	Bulgaria	87	No	Yes (1)	No	Yes (5)
28	Romania	54	No	No	No	Yes (5)

We may easily conclude that:

- a) The criteria used for the compilation of these reports are heterogeneous;
- b) Most national reports refer rhetorically to sports as the epitome of healthy living, an “island of bliss”, and do not even mention doping;
- c) With such inconsistencies and shortcomings in the national reports, we may assume that the European Monitoring Centre cannot provide feedback to individual countries, or that any possible feedback must be inadequate.

Apart from this specific example of the European reports on illicit substances, more in general, great confusion and superficiality as regards doping can be found in the opinions publicly expressed in these past years by a significant number of politicians, sports executives, researchers and criminal traffic experts. Nearly all of them focus only on doping habits among high-level athletes; only a few, very rightly, point out the much more critical aspect of doping diffusion among amateur sport practitioners and regular gym-goers, and even then they refer to it as a relatively recent phenomenon when, as we will see further on, this is not the case.

In the meantime, amidst such superficiality and misinformation, the illegal traffic in pharmaceutical substances used for doping flourishes undisturbed.

### 2.3 Towards a better understanding of the doping issue

To consider doping a phenomenon restricted to the sports milieu is, therefore, superficial and misguided, even though the reason may be that doping is almost only ever mentioned in relation to sports:

- Nothing is ever said about the frightening diffusion of doping among body builders and regular gym-goers or about the innumerable pathologies and death cases that ensue;
- The media report drug addiction among actors, models and other show business stars, but they never mention that many also consume doping substances;
- Nobody, or only very few people, ever dares to mention that doping is a real plague among soldiers and policemen, except in the USA where this issue – and all its consequences on everyday life and anti-criminal policies – was perceived some time ago and is adequately faced by researchers and daring journalists;
- Only a few praiseworthy scientific organizations and a few experts are ready to openly take a position against the indiscriminate sale of doping substances as pursued by a number of pharmaceutical companies, which advertise these substances as adjuvant treatment or a dietary supplement aimed at achieving physiological balance.

Therefore, the institutions can no longer put off a careful and thorough analysis of doping and the improper use of countless pharmaceutical substances in order find a remedy or at least curb the phenomenon. Besides, when a criminal organization collects and distributes a batch of anabolic steroids and EPO, it does not care whether these end up in the bodies of athletes, body builders, actors, policemen, or members of the general public who hope for a miraculous substitution of Schwarzenegger-like muscles for their body fat. If criminal organizations are so pragmatic and globalized, why should criminal laws, criminal authorities, police forces and the World Health Organization not be as practical and efficient? *Why do they not even try?*

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### 3. THE US DEA HAD ALREADY UNDERSTOOD THIS MANY YEARS AGO

Already, in autumn 1993, the *US Drug Enforcement Administration* (US DEA), had evidence of the significance of the illegal traffic in doping substances and pharmaceutical products relating to the USA as well as the rest of the world. Consequently, the DEA organized the Prague International Conference <sup>7</sup>, and invited Interpol, as well as the police departments of several countries, to attend.

The conference was attended by representatives of 19 of the most significant countries in the world: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Norway, the People's Republic of China, Poland, Russia, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, the UK and the USA. Representatives from the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO)/Interpol, the International Olympic Committee, the International Narcotics Control Board, the World Health Organization, the US Department of State, the US Food and Drug Administration, and the US Drug Enforcement Administration were also in attendance.

The purposes of the conference, which was the first of its kind, were to develop recognition of the consequences of anabolic agent abuse (the term "anabolic agents" refers to those substances that increase muscle mass and strength and includes anabolic steroids, human growth hormone (hGH), P2-agonists such as clenbuterol, and others), to examine steroid trafficking at the national and international levels, and to explore appropriate responses to the steroid abuse problem.

In the USA, anabolic steroids were made a controlled drug and added to Schedule III of the US Controlled Substances Act in February 1991. Since that time, over 185 investigations of major steroids dealers have been initiated, 283 arrests have been made, and six million dosage units and US\$ 2.5 million in assets have been seized. Most cases investigated by the DEA have involved international trafficking with steroids entering the USA from all over the world. The DEA also reported that many steroid traffickers are involved with drugs other than steroids, especially cocaine, and that traffickers are well organized at the highest level, never coming in contact with the drugs.

The main conclusions of the conference are outlined below:

*"The US DEA encourages all countries to place steroids under control. At the present time, only Canada, Sweden and the USA have controlled steroids.*

*The abuse of anabolic agents is no longer confined to Olympic and professional sport; it is now a problem in a number of countries affecting the wider society, especially adolescents and young adults.*

*Health, police, customs and policy officials involved in the issues of drug control, abuse and illicit traffic should familiarize themselves with the available information regarding anabolic agents in order to formulate informed policies and programmes.*

*In order to stop the growing demand for anabolic agents among young people, prevention efforts should be strengthened through expanded information and education programmes.*

*Governments should examine their national legislation with a view to strengthening controls over anabolic agents so as to curb their diversion into illicit traffic and also to identify manufacturers and quantities produced, imported and exported.*

*National authorities, consistent with their national legislation, should increase their cooperation concerning the international commerce and movement of anabolic agents with a view to combating the diversion of these substances.*

*Active cooperation and involvement of the pharmaceutical industry should be encouraged to discourage and combat the diversion of anabolic agents.*

*Police and customs authorities should provide operational assistance to each other in the investigation of trafficking in anabolic agents to the extent possible within legal and resource restraints.*

*Interpol and the Customs Cooperation Council should continue to collect, review and analyse existing information in order to assist the international community in developing sound policies and programmes regarding anabolic agent abuse and trafficking.*

*The World Health Organization should continue its analysis of global trends regarding the use and abuse of anabolic agents and the assessment of current educational, prevention, and regulatory activities with these substances and resources should be made available to continue these efforts.”*

### **3.1 Nobody heard or wished to hear the US DEA's cry of alarm**

It is all too easy to set the US DEA's detailed admonishments against what has (or has not) been done by the various countries and international institutions involved. Too easy, but also pointless and saddening: one would have to ask too many questions, which would remain unanswered or lead to frightening conclusions, about the role of pharmaceutical companies and those who should control them; the role of governments, which should protect public welfare; national legislations and international cooperation between prosecutors and police corps; and the historical, unrelenting development of drugs trafficking, which entails similar prospects for the traffic in doping substances.

It is certainly absurd to embark upon the study of the doping issue knowing it to be a phenomenon in constant and critical development, the seriousness of which is still ignored or underrated, and discover that the US DEA, not a minor institution, had already understood the whole situation and denounced it on an international level, advising all the institutions involved. It must be said that the US DEA investigated the issue because the



US illegal market was far ahead of all other markets while, thirteen years ago, other countries probably did not have a similar opportunity to understand the situation.

Besides, it may seem all too obvious; however, it is the case that one is unlikely to find anything unless one investigates or looks for it. To date, in many countries, no investigations or studies are carried out, so there is no perception of the seriousness of this phenomenon. In Italy, in 1997, the officer then in command of the NAS (Carabinieri narcotics squad, a unit that later became renowned for doping investigations), after a police operation in which they had seized large quantities of anabolic hormones, voiced alarm not dissimilar to that expressed by the US DEA: *“Illicit traffic in doping substances is increasing and follows the same channels used for addictive substances.”*<sup>2</sup>

Nobody took any notice or wished to understand the many indications that had been quite evident ten years previously. Yet, apart from the US DEA's explicit, international warning, several incidents occurred even before the Prague Conference, involving illicit traffic in doping substances other than anabolic steroids, such as growth hormone extracted from cadavers<sup>3</sup> (this traffic was and still is managed by Russian criminal organizations<sup>4</sup>), and erythropoietin, which had been recently synthesized in laboratories for the treatment of serious nephropathies and blood cancer. As far back as 1992, the FBI followed a former KGB agent, Subrahmanyam Kota, to prove his involvement, together with an accomplice, Vemuri Bhaskar Reddy, in an attempt to sell the formula for the production of a new EPO-based drug to Russian agents (in fact, undercover FBI agents) who were to put the substance on the black market. This attempt was foiled, but it clearly indicates that international and Russian criminal organizations had already paid great attention to this hormone<sup>5</sup>.

Besides, only the involvement of organized crime could explain the incredible diffusion of EPO consumption in the following years: EPO rapidly became one of the pharmaceutical substances with the largest sales, and this induced a massive overproduction, far beyond the real requirements of patients. This overproduction, estimated at about five to six times the treatment requirements, is supported by the very startling theft of phials, which occurred in 1999 in Nicosia (Cyprus)<sup>6</sup>. About 4,650,000 EPO phials were stolen from the warehouse of a pharmaceutical company. According to the Cyprus police, the theft was commissioned by a criminal organization particularly efficient in this field, and this vast number of phials was destined entirely for the sports black market. No international body ever investigated this incident and, as far as we know, the Cyprus authorities never solved the case. Yet, more than one reason should have induced further investigation of an incident that raised a number of serious questions:

- Why should such a significant quantity of EPO, more than enough to satisfy the treatment requirements of European patients for a whole year, be stocked on the small island of Cyprus? It is well known that EPO needs to be stocked at low temperatures and never for long periods of time. This

incredibly large amount of EPO was, therefore, clearly intended for use within a few days: by how many patients and in which country? Moreover, who produced these phials? Were the stolen ones substituted to satisfy the requirements of the patients for which they had been originally destined? Who supported the financial loss of the theft: the pharmaceutical company that produced them, the distributor, or others? Were complaints and requests for damages filed by the interested parties?

- How could it be that such a large stock of EPO, worth hundreds of millions of euros, was inadequately guarded? How could it be that nobody noticed anything during all the long hours necessary to move the phials from the warehouse to the (refrigerated!) truck? Most of all, how could it be that this truck had the time to reach the harbour and board the ship without anybody noticing? Lastly, how could it be that, on top of the hours necessary for the previous operations, there was sufficient time for the ship to leave the harbour and reach, undisturbed, international waters?
- Clearly, if the Cyprus authorities were immediately in a position to declare that the stolen phials were destined for the black market of the sports milieu, they must have had some information or clues; did they advise Interpol of the theft and the fact that these phials were, probably, bound for a harbour in Europe? If the Cyprus authorities did not advise Interpol, surely at least they advised the World Health Organization, in view of the hypothetical damage to patients who needed the substance?
- How many times, from the 1990s onwards, have stocks of EPO and growth hormone been stolen, as in Nicosia? For instance, a significant theft of EPO phials occurred in Australia a few days before the beginning of the Olympic Games; another theft of GH phials occurred in Phoenix (USA) a few weeks before the beginning of the Winter Olympic Games <sup>7</sup>; and in Italy the Neapolitan Camorra has stolen a significant amount of anabolic hormones and other doping substances <sup>8</sup>.

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#### 4. THE QUEST FOR INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN DOPING SUBSTANCES

Information on illicit international traffic in pharmaceutical substances used for doping is not easily accessible. The reason for this is obvious: in many countries, no regulations or limits are set for these substances and such countries are therefore ideal for setting up innumerable clandestine pharmaceutical plants that can sell their products in every part of the world. Obviously, when criminal organizations choose the routes for their illicit traffic in doping substances, they give privilege to those countries where there is no specific legislation and where customs controls are not strict. Information on traffic in doping substances has become increasingly difficult in these last ten years with the development of e-commerce, and these substances are purchased with credit cards directly through the Internet and delivered in plain parcels through the post.

For these reasons, information on seized substances and illicit traffic come, nearly exclusively, from a restricted number of countries; exceptional occurrences such as the EPO theft in Cyprus brought to light by accident or on account of extraordinary circumstances give us a glimpse of the seriousness of the diffusion of this phenomenon.

The Internet brought about new prospects as regards the availability of international information, although this is not always easy to find or understand, because very often it is buried within ponderous documents or amidst data dealing apparently with other subjects. Experience makes it possible to distinguish significant documents and find new information by using different combinations of key words or surfing the websites of various institutions, newspapers and scientific magazines. Sometimes, one may find a news item, a name or a date that may lead to other relevant information.

This type of investigation gives the net impression that one is dealing with an unimaginably vast phenomenon, and that it is underestimated, if not ignored, by the authorities of many countries and underrated or insufficiently considered even in those countries in which traffic in doping substances is an offence. And so it happens, even in those countries in which doping is a criminal offence, that attention is focused on the situation for one year and then the phenomenon is completely forgotten. National reports are quite revealing: they make no mention of doping for several years in a row, then the subject appears suddenly and is immediately forgotten once again.

Here are some of the many possible combinations of key words for whoever may want to plan a study, in the framework of an educational project with students, for instance, of the various aspects that characterize the illicit traffic in doping substances.

#### In English:

- "smuggling of steroids... testosterone... growth hormone..."

- "steroid smuggling"
- "seizure of steroids... of... steroid seizure..."
- "smuggling of Serostim...of Epogen..."
- "performance enhancing drug seizure"
- "steroid black market..."
- "10 million black market in..."
- "doping black market"
- "steroids... growth hormone...police"
- "veterinary steroid black market... smuggling of veterinary steroids"
- "veterinary steroid export... import"
- "veterinary steroids... body builder... body building"
- "Internet trade in steroids... in veterinary steroids"
- "illicit drug statistics"
- "manufacturer of veterinary steroids... of..."
- "illicit manufacture and supply of steroids... of veterinary steroids... of..."
- "trademark counterfeiting of steroids... of..."
- "...men indicted for conspiracy to sell...steroids..."
- "theft of steroids... of..."
- "black market biotechnology: ... EPO... hGH..."
- "the size of the black market for steroids... for..."
- "steroids actors... cinema... models..."
- "steroids on celluloid"
- "gyms... steroids...growth hormone..."
- "mafia... steroids..."
- "steroids... testosterone... growth hormone... Russian mafia"
- "actors... models... casting.... steroids ... Decadurabolin... Dianabol... Sustanon...."
- "steroid dependence... addiction"
- "steroids... anabolic steroids.... testosterone... mind"
- "drug catch"
- "a man charged... steroids... growth hormone..."
- "two... three... tons of anabolic steroids... steroids..."
- "steroid traffickers... testosterone..."
- "steroid... testosterone... growth hormone dealers"
- "one million... two million euros/dollars' worth of steroids..."

- “doping trade”
- “trade in steroids... amphetamines...”
- “a man was charged for possession of...”
- “arrested for purchase of steroids...”
- “distribution ring... selling... steroids...”
- “cross border... illicit... performance drugs”
- “largest steroid bust...”
- “plead guilty for steroids”
- “steroid raid”
- “supplying steroids to...”
- “sentenced for one year... steroid case”
- “steroid possession case”
- “a man fined over steroids”
- “home raid over steroid”
- “steroid sales... steroid sales over Internet”
- “convicted in steroids case”
- “...years’ probation... steroid... steroid ring”
- “...people indicted... steroids... growth hormone...”
- “man’s indictment... men’s indictment... steroids... growth hormone...”
- “corrupt officer... steroids”
- “distributing steroids... growth hormone”
- “distribution of steroids...”
- “distribution and marketing of steroids...”
- “distribute steroids...”
- “police officers... steroids”
- “cops... steroids”
- “prison officer... steroids”
- “soldiers... steroids”
- “bouncers... steroids”
- “fire-fighters... steroids”

**In Italian:**

- “traffico di sostanze dopanti... anabolizzanti...”
- “sequestro di anabolizzanti...”

- “arresto... traffico di... anabolizzanti...”
- “sequestro... pasticche... fiale...”
- “mercato nero... doping... anabolizzanti... ormoni...”
- “carabinieri... sequestrato... arrestato... anabolizzanti...”
- “guardia di finanza... sequestrato... arrestato... anabolizzanti...”

### In Spanish

- “incautación de... anabolizantes... hormonas... pastillas... ampollas”
- “policía... incautado... anabolizantes...”
- “detención de... personas”
- “red distribución... anabolizantes...”
- “trafico sustancias... anabolizantes... hormonales...”
- “trafico sustancias... anabolizantes... gimnasios”
- “medicamentos ilegales... clandestinos...”
- “mercado clandestino... dopaje”
- “Guardia Civil... incautado...”
- “Guardia Civil... desmantelado”
- “...principios activos”
- “fabricación... manipulación... distribución de...”

### In French

- “douane... saisi... produits anabolisants... hormones...”
- “saisie de... cachets... comprimés... ampoules... été découvertes”
- “trafic international de...”
- “...produits vétérinaires”
- “gendarmerie... mis à jour... trafic de...”
- “blanchissement... anabolisants”
- “saisie d’anabolisants... de...”
- “marché noir de...”
- “dopage criminalité”
- “hormones dopage”

Most of the information on the international situation is in English, thanks mainly to the great number of criminal and police investigations carried out by the US authorities and, although to a lesser degree, by the

Australian and Canadian authorities. Also, other countries, namely Scandinavian countries, usually provide information in English. A significant amount of information can be accessed using key words in French; these refer for the most part to France, Belgium and Canada. Thanks to recent actions against doping induced by the new policy followed by the Zapatero government and applied by the judicial authorities and the Guardia Civil, important documents in Spanish are available; these are complemented by a few items from Mexico and other Latin American countries. It is much more difficult to explore the national situation of countries where information is given out only in the local language. However, on the whole, we may consider that, using English, it is possible to access most of the information available, also because most countries use English for the annual reports that they submit to the more important international institutions and to government, judicial, health, sports and business authorities.

During such a survey, one must always pay great attention to the fact that texts available on the Internet tend to be moved and vary. Indeed, entering the same key words at different times will probably produce results that are, in part, different: some items disappear, others appear for the first time. The most important criteria for selection of information are, obviously, reliability of the source, degree of precision and detail of the information, and consistency with information provided by different sources. Among the various types of documents available, priority should be given to judicial acts, official communications released by judicial and police authorities, national and international reports of the various public institutions, scientific texts, official communications released by the various international agencies and confirmed by other sources, and detailed press articles confirmed by other sources.

On the other hand, the choice of a method to collate and catalogue information obtained is more difficult, both because the subject, illicit traffic in doping substances, is relatively recent, and because, as explained earlier on, such traffic targets circles that are very different but, at the same time, closely related. The focus on such a subject must be a combination of analysis and synthesis, so as to distinguish and characterize, without ever losing sight of the whole, the functional relationship between the different parts. Unscrupulous pharmaceutical companies, whose policy is the deliberate overproduction of substances that may be used for doping, have no interest in distinguishing between end users, be they athletes or body builders. Criminal organizations that manage this illicit traffic do not care which class of users patronizes the gyms to which they deliver these substances. Neither does the gym monitor, involved in the traffic in doping substances, care much if the user who buys a dose of growth hormone is an athlete involved in competitive sports or an amateur practitioner who wishes only to improve his/her body structure.

Consequently, politicians who establish criminal laws, police corps, magistrates and educators involved in educational and preventative projects should always strive to analyse the fundamental elements of this



phenomenon and, at the same time, try to maintain a dynamic (more or less important changes may occur in time) and global outlook. These are the prerequisites for any anti-doping policy that is likely to achieve some degree of success, although the diffusion of drugs over the years clearly indicates that it would be utopian to think of definitively destroying a phenomenon that is very similar, also in view of the economical interests supporting doping. It is pointless to propose defeating doping completely, but reducing its diffusion and dangerousness is already a tangible and very useful action.

#### 4.1 Organizing the information

The most striking aspect at present is the degree of disorganization of public institutions. A policy reversal must, obviously, be dictated by political and judicial international institutions, as well as those dealing with public health and sports. They should all, each within its own scope, carry out a detailed and sufficiently exhaustive survey of this issue, taking advantage of privileged channels for acquiring information which would allow them to go well beyond the present dossier: classified data banks, results of international criminal investigations, and data provided by informative services on criminal, industrial and business aspects that are the basis for production and illicit traffic in these substances.

The fundamental question, one that is difficult to answer at present, is whether public institutions have the will and capacity necessary for effective actions. A certain degree of doubt does exist, and it would be pointless to pretend otherwise. Indeed, if this were not so, why did the meticulous analysis and consequent alarm passionately expressed by the US DEA at the Prague Conference in 1993 remain unanswered? Why has the illicit traffic in addictive substances continued its progression, despite an outwardly aggressive policy sustained by several countries? In view of the close connections between traffic in addictive substances and doping substances, why should the public institutions involved – which have failed in their struggle against drugs – have the will and capacity to successfully stem this second and more recent phenomenon?

These questions will probably remain unanswered for a long time. Maybe it is unavoidable that private, illegal or criminal interests, mainly because they tend to be efficiently targeted, prevail over the role of public institutions, with targets that are less clear and which tend to be less efficient and embedded in bureaucracy. Such considerations, however, are hardly suited to the present, very distressing condition that the sporting world is experiencing on account of doping. The history of modern sports is not a long one: only about one hundred years for most sports disciplines. Only in these past forty years have sports been generally proposed as an educational model and, consequently, an essential component in the education of children and youngsters. In high-level sports, which continue to be much appreciated by spectators and are therefore readily sold to TV networks and sponsors, the milieu knows how to live with doping and just pretend to counter the phenomenon, but such coexistence is not possible for sports, which are intended as educational instruments, because doping obliterates all credibility.

Despite prospects that are far from rosy and undeniable responsibility for concealing, harbouring and often even encouraging doping, the sporting world is also by far the one that has expressed and still shows the greatest interest and strongest will to counter it. This statement needs to be explained, as it may otherwise appear ambiguous or even inconsistent with previous ones. Only interest or hypocrisy may lead anyone to deny that, for quite some time now, doping has pervaded high-level sport and found among its executives acquiescence and even complicity. But, in this same world, there is also a strong component of people for whom sports are coupled to ethics and who find in this association the only justification for the survival of sports. These people are not willing to accept the deterioration of sports and find allies among schoolteachers and parents.

Who but these people, together with those who are seriously concerned about the health of children and youngsters, should actively oppose doping? Certainly not pharmaceutical companies, beset by competition and the urge to increase, year after year, the sale of pharmaceutical substances as if these were ordinary merchandise. Nor the managers of gyms patronized by body builders whose income is greatly increased through the sale of doping substances. Nor again hypothetical and inexistent associations of non-consumer artists (neither doping nor addictive substances) who would decide to take a stand against male artists who use anabolic steroids and female artists who use growth hormone. Nor commanders of military and police corps who, after years of inertia, would suddenly start prosecuting soldiers or policemen who resort to doping.

The only opposition, for what it is worth, to the development of doping has come from the world of sports or, to be exact, from an unyielding component of this world. A quick look at the history of sports is sufficient to ascertain this fact, so much so that everyone believes doping to be typically restricted to sports. The sporting world has witnessed quite a number of cases in which elite athletes have tested positive at anti-doping tests, which have been followed by negative reactions in the public opinion and press investigations. At the same time, doping developed in other circles, in which there were no anti-doping tests, no press investigations and no expression of disapproval in the public opinion.

In July 2005, for instance, an investigation by the Italian police in cooperation with the police authorities of other countries indicated a significant diffusion of anabolic steroid consumption among US soldiers stationed in Iraq. Their generals remained silent, even though a subsequent investigation (one of the very few investigations) conducted immediately afterwards by courageous Associated Press reporters in Afghanistan, Kuwait and Iraq showed that there were also other channels providing anabolic steroids to US soldiers <sup>1</sup>.

Very slowly, politicians are becoming aware of the seriousness of the doping issue and are trying to do something about it in several countries. In the meantime, health operators have expressed warnings concerning health hazards and the social costs in terms of the treatment of doping-induced pathologies. In

other words, the conditions are beginning to be favourable and it may be possible to achieve something important.

- In this situation, the first step should be to persuade public authorities to assume responsibility for this issue, study it and organize all relevant information;
- The second step would then be to exploit the more adequate international institutional channels to transfer such information, duly screened and organized, to the various countries in order to raise awareness and indicate a means of opposing this phenomenon;
- The following phase would be to raise awareness and encourage the various countries to establish appropriate criminal laws aimed at countering doping and, more specifically, all those aspects connected to the illicit traffic in these substances;
- At the same time, the various countries would be provided with a standard method to use for collecting and cataloguing information so that their annual reports adequately reflect what each country has effectively achieved in this field.

#### 4.2 Interpreting available information

First of all, it must be clear that the traffic in doping substances or pharmaceutical substances that may be used for doping occurs on an international, often intercontinental level. The phenomenon must therefore be studied by Interpol, the World Health Organization and other public international institutions that coordinate national customs authorities or monitor the control of counterfeiting, traffic in addictive substances, industrial and financial offences, etc.

These institutions should be aware of the fact that such a relevant analytical and organizational effort aimed at countering the illicit traffic in doping substances would provide them with increased analytical and organizational capacities that would also prove useful in more efficiently countering another issue that is closely correlated and partly overlaps doping: the traffic in addictive substances.

In short, the need to adequately face up to the struggle against doping may provide an opportunity to raise the level of anti-drugs policies, which seem to proceed unenthusiastically, following some sort of ritual: every time a batch of cocaine or other addictive drug is seized, the event is emphasized without ever evaluating it as a percentage of the estimated amount of the substances that are marketed. Maybe the time has come to evaluate the work of police forces and judicial systems as regards both types of traffic in terms of efficiency indexes:

1) A reasoned estimate – expressed in tons, quintals or any other measure considered appropriate – of the marketed substances (in the individual country, in a specific continent and in the world) over the course of one year;

2) The total sum – expressed in the same unit of measurement – of the substances seized and the percentage they represent as against the marketed substances (efficiency index);

3) A multiannual plan to develop these efficiency indexes.

This type of evaluation system would obviously encourage legislators, police and judicial authorities to implement projects aimed at rationalization, evaluation and innovation; it would also enable political authorities and the public to immediately understand the achievements of these bodies. Many schoolteachers and citizen associations are involved in drug and doping prevention programmes. It is only right to provide these operators with a system that would allow them to evaluate and monitor these two phenomena and this would, in turn, improve their educational actions.

Making these illegal activities appear not clearly identifiable, fluctuating or non-existent is the best way of pushing honest people to mistrust and hopelessness and, at the same time, favouring the illicit activities of dishonest people. A look at the reports recently presented by the international institutions that deal with addictive drugs is sufficient to show that data presented by individual countries are absolutely inconsistent. Some countries correctly follow the indications established by the central authorities concerning data collection and evaluation systems; others take into consideration only some aspects and provide no information on all the others.

In each country, everything should be based on a systematic national survey carried out at regular intervals through approved questionnaires in different languages submitted to a representative population (gender, age group, social status, etc). The percentage of declared users of addictive or doping substances, combined with average calculated or declared daily or weekly doses would already provide an initial, approximate, evaluation of the amount of each substance marketed in each country. The result of this calculation could then be compared and, if need be, corrected on the basis of data brought to light through criminal investigations (information provided by informers, wire tapping of people under investigation, or statements given by a supergrass or “pentito” and duly verified). During the initial phase, it is of the utmost importance to establish an order of magnitude of the phenomena, so a possible mistake of 20 or 30% in the evaluation is not really important since, at present, we do not even have an order of magnitude!

At present, there are no official estimates as regards the total volume of this illicit traffic or that of the various addictive drugs, and there are certainly none related to doping substances. The few unofficial estimates are only related to cocaine and heroine and the figures are significantly different. In the meantime, and hoping that the national and international institutions in charge of both addictive and doping substances achieve this target as the standard of their work routine, worldwide research was performed in relation to this review, following the methodology illustrated in the previous paragraphs. It provides a remarkable amount of information and data, which can be used as the basis for an initial estimate of the total volume of traffic in doping substances on a world scale.

Information referring to investigations, confiscations and other data on illicit traffic in doping substances may be classified according to its relevance and significance: it may be considered extremely relevant and significant when it refers to events proving particularly large-scale traffic or when, even though the traffic is medium or small in volume, it allows us to understand new and revealing aspects about the dynamics and trends of the doping substance black market. All other information, classified as less relevant cases, is useful only when considered as a whole and as regards the time sequence.

The following paragraphs include a discussion on some of the information classified as *extremely relevant and significant*. It is grouped by subject and by circles; this favours its interpretation and facilitates the identification of various blocks that will build up to a final description of this phenomenon.

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## 5. TRAFFIC IN DOPING SUBSTANCES: RECENT HISTORY

The analysis must necessarily begin with a mention of several events that occurred between the early 1970s and late 1980s and are essential to the recent history of traffic in doping substances.

### 5.1. Role of the Italo-American Mafia in the 70s and 80s

The more powerful Italo-American Mafia families, namely Gambino, Luchese, Colombo and Gotti, had long since established absolute control over the US illegal narcotics market when, at the beginning of the 1970s, they saw the potential of a new illicit market, that of anabolic steroids. They rapidly took control and tried to develop it by taking advantage of another industry that was partly in their hands: the cinema industry. They implemented an idea that proved perversely effective for both their illegal businesses. It was probably hatched in one of their Gold's Gym chain of fitness centres, patronized by several body builders and actors, and consisted of producing a feature film, *Pumping Iron*, with body builder actors. One of these was Arnold Schwarzenegger who later admitted to being a consumer of anabolic steroids. The idea was clearly to promote the image of body builders and make it attractive by associating it with bold and brave heroes. This feature proved a commercial success and was the first of a long series. Another Mafia family, the Colombo family, also expanded into the pornographic underground film industry, beginning with *Deep Throat*, featuring Linda Lovelace, in which it invested a few thousand US dollars and had a return of 600 million dollars. The Colombo family followed this first film with countless others featuring men and women body builders <sup>1</sup>.

The Italo-American Mafia remained in control of illicit traffic in both narcotics and doping substances until around 1995, when it began to lose parts of the doping market to the so-called ROC (Russian Organized Crime), which offered anabolic steroids, testosterone and growth hormone extracted from corpses at much lower prices. The figure of Ralph Dols, a police officer married to a woman from the Gambino clan, is symbolic of what we may consider the decline of the Italo-American Mafia.

Ralph Dols was a body builder and habitual consumer of anabolic steroids, which he also peddled at large, including to many colleagues in the police. In 1995, this same depraved and ruthless man, who was involved years earlier in a brutal event involving a Haitian immigrant victim, contacted the ROC because he found it more convenient to acquire doping substances from the Russian Mafia which, during those years, also worked with the Sicilian Mafia and had taken control of the traffic in doping substances. The latter was already firmly in control of the traffic in doping substances, but the case of Ralph Dols, a policeman and Mafioso, epitomizes the end of an era and the beginning of another one in which the global market also embodies criminal affairs <sup>2</sup>. Quite soon, the Russian Mafia, in turn, had to face competition from other doping markets, in particular the Asian one.

The US State Department's 1995 and 1996 reports contain significant indications of the complicity between Italo-American Mafia clans and Sicilian Mafia clans in the traffic in anabolic steroids, as well as heroin. In particular, the 1996 report specifies: *"The Government of Italy (GOI) cooperates fully with US law enforcement agencies and plays an important role internationally through information-sharing and support for international law enforcement training. Italian organized crime groups are major players in international narcotics trafficking and money laundering. Italy continued its aggressive assault on organized crime in 1996, arresting and prosecuting numerous Mafia bosses. Vigorous law enforcement efforts also yielded major asset seizures and disrupted some narcotics and steroids trafficking routes through Italy... Both US and Italian prosecutors have used the MLAT to obtain evidence for prosecutions of steroids cases... During 1996, the Carabinieri dismantled an organization that was obtaining anabolic steroids throughout other European countries as well as by diversion from Italian pharmacies using prescriptions. In turn, the steroids were mailed to Miami or sent by courier to Los Angeles and Chicago."*<sup>3</sup>

The description of the Mafia's involvement is not idle historiography, but is intended to show how, as early as the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, this illegal doping business was already very important in the US market and how it developed even further once other more complex criminal organizations moved in. As may be observed in the following paragraphs, this brief historical outline of events in the USA contains all the elements that will later characterize the diffusion of doping on a worldwide scale. Therefore, when the US DEA summoned the authorities of all the other countries to Prague in 1993, illicit traffic in doping substances had been going on in the USA for over twenty years.

## 5.2 David Jenkins, the "good guy" from Edinburgh

Part of the history of illicit traffic in doping substances in the USA was written in the first person by the former European 400m champion (1971) and silver medallist at the 1972 Olympic Games in the 4 x 400m relay, the Scotsman David Jenkins. This story, like many others, should have been thought provoking, especially in sporting circles, but nobody took any notice of it. He was a "good guy", with an honest face. You wouldn't have expected anything from him other than good manners and model behaviour in those long-gone 1970s. But, just a few years later, at the beginning of the 1980s, at the age of thirty his look had become distant and fleeting, his smile the ironic grimace of one who thinks he knows it all, and knows he will go a long way.

Jenkins did indeed go a long way; he moved from Scotland to the USA and later set up, with Juan Javier Macklis, a plant in Mexico for the production of anabolic steroids exported in large quantities to the USA. The police, who had been keeping an eye on him, discovered his activities and arrested him. In December 1988, a US court found him guilty of illicit anabolic steroid trafficking, for an overall sum of 100 million US dollars, and sentenced him to seven years of prison, to be served in the Mojave Desert Jail. He certainly had many dollars put aside and he was also very clever. Be that as it may, despite the seven-year sentence, Jenkins was free

after only nine months, which provided just the time necessary to get over this bad adventure and turn it into a useful experience. In 1993, Jenkins set up a partnership with Dan Duchaine, a well-known anabolic steroid guru who had previously been his accomplice in the traffic in anabolic substances, to produce dietary supplements for athletes. Some time later, his partner Duchaine, who had been charged of the murder of six young body builders because of false information published in his book, got into trouble with the police again for illicit traffic in anabolic steroids and growth hormone obtained from Russian criminal organizations. Duchaine then died some time later, aged 48, from kidney trouble, probably due to continued consumption of anabolic hormones <sup>4</sup>.

David Jenkins continued on his own, and is now at the head of Next Nutrition, a leading North American company that produces dietary supplements for athletes and body builders <sup>5</sup>.

His profile in the company information includes Jenkins' photo (his face is still clean and his smile even more mischievous), all sorts of nice things about him, and forgets any mention of the embarrassing details that are common knowledge: *"At the age of 51, David Jenkins is a rare pioneer in the nutrition industry. Under his direction Next Proteins has grown from a garage start-up to a leader in the protein industry and one of the largest contributors to furthering research..."*<sup>6</sup>

As befits such impressive scientific credentials, he is now a multimillionaire and lives in the most exclusive neighbourhood of San Diego.

Sporting circles and, in particular, athletics circles, should not forget that this doping tycoon comes from the world of sport and that it was during the long years in which he was engaged in high-level athletics that he acquired sufficient information and experience to be able to understand that there was a huge demand for doping substances that could be satisfied. The sporting world's silence on the Jenkins matter is a terrible sign of superficiality, if not complicity.

### 5.3 Professor Robert Kerr's strange interviews

To tell the truth, sporting circles remained silent also when Professor Robert Kerr, on 9 August 1984, soon after the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984, declared in a startling public interview that several athletes who had won gold, silver and bronze Olympic medals had first come to his surgery, where he had administered growth hormone, GH, to all of them. At that time, GH had not yet been synthesized in laboratories, so it was extracted from the pituitary gland of corpses. Several documents are available on this matter, including documents denouncing organ trafficking in relation to a large number of bodies bought in India by pharmaceutical companies. It is also well known that, at the beginning of the 1980s, Russian criminal organizations were already predominant in GH trafficking, as they were able to offer it on the US market at extremely competitive prices <sup>7</sup>.



Some considered Robert Kerr's interview to be an act of contrition when, on the contrary, it was an explicit promotion of GH, the consumption of which steadily increased among athletes in the following years. An epidemiologic study on that generation of athletes who consumed GH extracted from corpses has not as yet been carried out, so we do not know if there were any health-related consequences.

Florence Griffith was among Robert Kerr's clients: after the death of the queen of the Seoul Olympics, he made an extravagant statement, claiming that he had treated her for ankle problems <sup>8</sup>.

David Jenkins never changed his course; he simply substituted the sale of dietary supplements, which has made him rich, for the sale of anabolic hormones, which leads to prison. One might also imagine that, like him, the pupils of Robert Kerr, a professor in endocrinology, never relinquished their hold on sports to dedicate themselves to the common activity of a physician: to treat patients.

#### 5.4 Dictators are also involved in the trafficking of doping substances

In February 1968, two distinct US criminal courts had already proceeded *in absentia* against General Manuel Antonio Noriega, at that time the dictator of Panama, and found him guilty of illegal international trafficking of cocaine and racketeering. In December 1989, the Mexican governmental narcotics department revealed that it had incontrovertible proof that Noriega was also involved in the illegal production and traffic in anabolic steroids.

It appeared that Noriega's partner, Juan Javier Macklis, had confessed to the Mexican authorities that, during a secret meeting in Panama, he had received from General Noriega himself 800,000 US dollars as an investment in the production of anabolic steroids. The production plant, managed by a university professor of chemistry, had greatly increased its production and proved very profitable for both Noriega and his partner. Most of these anabolic steroids were illegally introduced into the USA. For this reason, the US authorities had kept this powerful channel from Tijuana under close surveillance for some time. Macklis was charged with anabolic steroid trafficking for an overall value of several million dollars! But the US never imagined that General Noriega was also behind this traffic. Only after the Mexican authorities revealed Noriega's involvement did the US DEA understand the significance of the hundreds of thousands of anabolic steroid doses labelled "Panama" that were seized in different parts of the USA and in Great Britain, France and Italy <sup>9</sup>. The reader may not have noticed that the Mexican producer of anabolic steroids in whose plant Noriega invested nearly one million dollars was the very same Juan Javier Macklis, who was David Jenkins' partner.

Apart from the obscure political reasons that led the Mexican authorities to reveal the charges against Noriega after several months and only a few weeks before the US invasion of Panama, the fact remains that a man so powerful in the trafficking of narcotics found it profitable to invest in the anabolic steroid black market as well,

which is a clear indication that the illegal market of these substances had reached a level close to that of the narcotics trade <sup>10</sup>.

In short, towards the end of the 1980s, the David Jenkins and General Manuel Antonio Noriega affairs indicated that Mexican anabolic steroid plants were the moneymaking solution chosen by individual criminals rather than official pharmaceutical companies. But this interpretation was in contrast to the origin of these Mexican plants, which had certainly been set up by official pharmaceutical companies aiming to produce, at costs much lower than in the USA, a substance that was expected to be very useful in the treatment of several diseases. It is true that medical research subsequently showed that this was not so: anabolic steroids were indicated only for a restricted number of pathologies and also caused serious, unacceptable side effects. Could it be that, as a result of such poor results on patients, the pharmaceutical companies needed to get rid of the Mexican plants producing anabolic steroids and maybe decided to sell them, even to unscrupulous individuals?

It is a totally plausible theory, but this is not how things went, as the following facts will prove. As shall be seen, the pharmaceutical companies remained constantly in control of the Mexican plants.

#### 5.5 How pharmaceutical companies looked after starving children in the third world

Pharmaceutical companies began to focus their attention on malnourished children in third world countries at the beginning of the 1970s with numerous experiments and studies published in the more prestigious scientific journals. The title of one such experiment, published in September 1963, is unambiguous: "*Stanozolol in paediatrics*" <sup>11</sup>, as is the title of another one, published in July 1965: "*Clinical trials of anabolic steroids in malnourished children*" <sup>12</sup>.

The Canadian/Jamaican sprinter Ben Johnson was born in those years and went on to test positive at the Seoul Olympics for that same substance, stanozolol.

Nearly twenty years after these experiments, in the 1980s, the Department for Asia and the Pacific of the *International Organization of Consumers Union*, with headquarters in Malaysia, published a terrifying article detailing how these experiments had been followed by the large-scale administration of anabolic steroids to malnourished children. Three multinational pharmaceutical companies were directly involved and managed to sell huge quantities of anabolic steroids. The article pointed out that the use of anabolic steroids on children was strictly forbidden in all industrialized countries and went on to denounce the Dutch company Organon for giving it to children in *twenty-nine third world countries* (or developing countries, as these are called today). Also, the US pharmaceuticals giant, Winthrop, and the Swiss company, Ciba-Geigy, were involved in large-scale sales of anabolic steroids in the poorer countries <sup>13</sup>.

The image below is a reproduction of a commercial flysheet for Fertabolin, an anabolic steroid. As can be seen, Organon definitely targeted children and promoted this drug as a substance that would *stimulate physiological appetite, help gain normal weight and height, and ensure optimal assimilation of food* <sup>14</sup>.

A number of Dutch medical associations publicly denounced this policy and finally forced Organon to put a stop to this irresponsible and shameful commercial operation. It should be underlined that the leaflet contained in packs distributed among the poorer countries “forgot” to mention most of the side effects associated to anabolic steroids.

**FERTABOLIN**  
FOR A LIFE FULL OF  
FUN & FROLIC




- \* improves blood picture
- \* stimulates physiological appetite
- \* helps gain normal weight and height
- \* ensures optimal assimilation of food

Composition :  
Each 2 ml contains :  
Ethyllosterone S.P. 0.2mg  
Fertus Fuminate I.P. 12mg  
Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> 1P. 2mg

Presentation— 104ml, 208ml.

**Organon (India) Limited**  
Bangalore House  
22, Chatterjee Road  
Calcutta-700 071

 © Organon 1986

In what year did pharmaceutical companies suspend this evil business?

It is a fact that, as late as November 1986, the Pakistani health minister cancelled the licence of a number of pharmaceutical substances; among them there were no less than eight different anabolic steroid-based substances, including Fertabolin <sup>15</sup>. This measure, however, cannot have been very effective since, in September 1988, the health minister had to issue another provision cancelling the licence of these same anabolic substances and a number of other ones that had appeared in the meantime. Importantly, Fertabolin again figures on this list, no longer produced by the pharmaceutical company Organon but by a *Karachi-based company known as Hormone Labs*, which also produced another twelve anabolic steroid-based substances and testosterone <sup>16</sup>.

Clearly, a “takeover” had taken place between multinational pharmaceutical companies and regional companies that had cropped up out of nowhere.

Yet, in July 1986, the World Health Organization had written: “*It is vital that Governments establish policies to monitor production, distribution and use of pharmaceutical substances*”, while the European Parliament had

approved a document stating: *"The poorer populations are dying of tuberculosis, pneumonia and malaria because they do not have access to drugs that are essential to the treatment of these diseases, while pharmaceutical companies promote the sale of substances that are unnecessary and potentially very dangerous, such as anabolic steroids administered to malnourished children."*<sup>17</sup>

In an interview released in 1995, Dan Duchaine, David Jenkins's business partner who had been involved in several criminal investigations, blithely recounted his life history and said that, at the beginning of the 1980s, he had received anabolic steroids from Great Britain and India and then sold them to US traffickers<sup>18</sup>. This admission allows us to understand that, in those years, anabolic steroids from the Indian market, already controlled by Mafia clans, were not used only for the perverse administration to children, and further supports the theory sustained in this dossier: the close interrelationship between the consumption of doping substances among various classes of consumers (athletes, body builders, soldiers and show business personalities) and the distribution of these same substances for falsely therapeutic reasons.

In November 2005, about forty years after the uncontrolled experiments and about twenty years after the large-scale "therapeutic" administration of anabolic steroids to malnourished children, despite various appeals that went unheard and institutional provisions, the journal *Current Science* published an article written by the head of the biotechnology department of Bharathidasan University in India. On the subject of the above experiments and others carried out in third world countries, he wrote: *"India is the ideal place for clinical tests carried out without any precautions ... Anabolic steroids are administered to many children in Bangladesh in order to accelerate their development so that they may be introduced to prostitution earlier and more easily. All this happens not without the involvement of pharmaceutical companies and physicians and the complete apathy of Government authorities ... We must respect bioethical principles and stop playing around with poor people, taking advantage of the fact they lack knowledge and need help"*<sup>19</sup>.

The competent authorities should investigate more thoroughly evidence suggesting that the diffusion of anabolic steroids in developing countries still occurs as humanitarian aid<sup>20</sup>.

The following paragraphs will show that there is continuity in the history of doping and that it deserves to be discovered and thoroughly investigated by international police institutions and other international bodies in charge of public health. According to this line of continuity, countries such as Pakistan and, even more so, India, which were colonized by pharmaceutical companies, have suddenly progressed to the position of leaders in the uncontrolled production and illegal international traffic in anabolic steroids and other doping substances: we may suppose that such a transformation is only a veil covering a number of multinational pharmaceutical companies.

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## 6. ROLE OF THE RUSSIAN CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER FORMER SOVIET COUNTRIES

The expression “Russian organized crime” really collectively indicates over seventy mafia-like clans and several other criminal organizations based in the various republics of the dissolved Soviet block. It is a complex criminal constellation that was initially closely connected to the past political regime and then established its own role and elaborated new strategies as the economic system approached open market industrial and commercial systems.

In order to fully understand the reasons behind the progression of illegal business managed by Russian organized crime, or ROC, one should first take into consideration the particularly competitive prices at which, for many years, ROC was able to offer doping substances on the illegal markets in Western Europe, North America, Asia and Oceania. Low prices, associated with good quality and ROC’s capacity to operate worldwide, favoured this expansion.

Several considerations on the subject of the quality/price ratio are important in order to gain a better understanding of the dynamics that allowed other countries in different geographical areas to occupy parts of the illegal international market:

- Wealthy and better informed consumers are not particularly concerned about the price of doping substances because they tend to buy original drugs, which are sure to contain the desired active principle; this accounts for a small percentage of subjects (probably between 5 and 7% of the total number of doping consumers);
- The quality/price ratio is a very significant element for consumers who are informed but have a limited amount of money with which to purchase doping substances (they represent about 20-25% of doping consumers);
- Lastly, price is the main element for consumers with low purchasing power; usually, this class of consumers (about 70-75%) live in countries in which reliable information on the quality of the different drugs available on the black market is not easily accessible.

Between the beginning of the 1990s and the present day, ROC was able to be extremely competitive for consumers in the second target group, thanks to the high scientific level of chemical laboratories in former Soviet Union countries, and attract a significant section of the consumers in the third target group by releasing on the black market counterfeit pharmaceutical substances, which usually contained lower concentrations of the active principle and, in some cases, only water <sup>1</sup>.

All these considerations are true not only for anabolic steroids. Indeed, Russian organized crime is able to bring illegally to the USA large quantities of testosterone, which is later packaged and sold at significantly

higher prices. Little is known about other doping substances, since the US DEA has never mentioned any data regarding substances other than anabolic steroids and testosterone.

However, a number of events support the hypothesis that ROC is also trafficking other hormones.

The dynamics of the doping black market for anabolic steroids and testosterone are very different from those for substances currently used for therapeutic purposes, in particular peptide hormones (mainly EPO and GH). The following paragraphs will show how multinational pharmaceutical companies were able to exploit the fact that these substances, which are particularly profitable, are essential for the treatment of patients, in order to mask overproduction destined for doping purposes.

The opinion of a particularly well informed “expert” on the Russian Mafia was expressed in an interview in 1995 with Dan Duchaine, David Jenkins’ partner, inveterate consumer of anabolic steroids and later also involved in quite a few cases of illicit trafficking, for which he served several prison sentences. This is how he described ROC’s role: *“In England, a lot of ampoules...are being counterfeited, but in America that’s rare because most steroids coming into this country are smuggled here from Russia by the Russian Mafia in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. I can’t say anything bad about the stuff the Russian immigrants in Brooklyn are selling because the quality is outstanding and the prices are reasonable. You can buy growth hormone at 35 dollars for four I.U.s, and the best you can do otherwise is 80 dollars for four I.U.s...”*<sup>2</sup>. This interview was published on a body building website and was therefore presumably released for commercial purposes, albeit mitigated by allusive language so as to avoid trouble with the law. Also of note is the fact that, during the same interview, Duchaine openly favours the use of anabolic steroids in AIDS treatment; strangely enough, this proposal is perfectly in line with the interests of pharmaceutical companies, which repeatedly tried to accredit anabolic steroids as adjuvant treatment. The Food and Drugs Administration thwarted this scheme<sup>3</sup>.

A perfect example of how ROC proceeded to corrupt people who would be useful to its own trafficking is the relationship based on mutual interests established in the 1990s with the police officer Ralph Dols, who was also connected to the Colombo Mafia clan through his wife<sup>4</sup>.

At that time, the Russian criminal organization was already laying its hands on the illegal traffic in doping substances, which had previously been controlled by the Italo-American Mafia. Conflicts of interest arose after a few years of profitable affairs and, on 26 August 1997, Dols was shot in a New York suburb controlled by ROC and died the next morning<sup>5</sup>. Proof was never found that he had been killed by the Russian Mafia, but it is difficult to imagine that anybody else would attempt the murder of such a powerful figure in the territory controlled by ROC. Dols was not the only police officer involved in anabolic steroid traffic in complicity with ROC. Indeed, since then, it has been proved that several US police officers were connected to ROC.

The report presented by the US authorities in Sydney in November 1999 during the International Summit on Doping in Sports specifies that, in the previous months, the US DEA *“arrested 15 members of the Russian criminal organization who had illegally imported two tons of anabolic steroids into the USA”*. The report goes



on to say that *“this and other investigations indicate that the anabolic steroid black market is steadily developing and becoming more sophisticated and that it is strictly controlled by criminal networks”*<sup>6</sup>.

A better understanding of the great development of the operational capacities of Russian and Eastern European criminal organizations comes from the illuminating declarations, dated 19 January 2001, issued by the Commander of the Canadian Special Narcotics Unit: *“For a long time we have been unprepared to face Eastern European criminal organizations; they consist of well prepared and violent individuals, experts in the corruption of government officials, civil servants and private industries. These organizations have taken on unemployed KGB officials and agents... These criminal groups – who have mastered new technologies – progressively increased their involvement in illicit traffic in cocaine, anabolic steroids and ecstasy”*.

In March 2001, Paddy Rawlinson, from the Centre for Comparative Criminology of the University of Wales, published a paper entitled *“Russian Organized Crime and the Baltic States: Assessing the Threat”*, in which he indicated that the difficult transition from communism to an open market economy allowed Russian criminal organizations to greatly increase their power: *“The inability of legislators, law enforcement and the judiciary to respond effectively to the draconian changes and challenges presented by the new regimes further exacerbated the political and social insecurities of the early transition years which in some cases gave criminal entrepreneurs carte blanche access to the economy. Russia was particularly vulnerable”*. On the subject of traffic in doping substances, Rawlinson wrote: *“Muscle also made money as Russian groups transported large shipments of anabolic steroids to Scandinavian countries using regular ferry crossings from Finland and Estonia. The bodybuilding route doubled as a body-moving route, one of ROC’s most popular passages for human smuggling”*<sup>7</sup>.

In that same period, the Georgian Centre for Studies on Corruption and Transnational Crime wrote: *“Traffic in steroids and amphetamines passes from the hands of Russian Mafia organizations to Scandinavian countries through Estonia”*<sup>8</sup>.

Another episode, which occurred on 14 December in the USA, proves that the Russian Mafia was also involved in GH trafficking and indicates significant connections with high-level sports. Konstantin Simberg, a nineteen-year-old from Ukraine, was shot while he was speaking over the telephone with an FBI agent, explaining the details of the colossal thievery of GH he had accomplished with other members of a Russian criminal gang. They had robbed a truck that was delivering GH phials to a drugstore in Phoenix; the overall value of the cargo amounted to three million dollars (the equivalent of 6,000 phials). After his arrest, Konstantin agreed to cooperate with the police and revealed that the operation had, in fact, been commissioned by the chemist himself, who had wished to profit from the insurance policy and also release the phials on the doping black market. Indeed, the FBI later indicated that part of these phials was destined for Salt Lake City in view of the Winter Olympic Games, scheduled to begin a few weeks later<sup>9</sup>.

It is strange but also disturbing that the US DEA did not pay any attention to and made no mention in its annual reports of this case or similar ones involving doping substances other than anabolic steroids.

In January 2002, a report on ROC was published, focusing mainly on its criminal activities in the USA and Canada. The report explained that ROC cooperated with criminal organizations of other countries; this characteristic allows for a better understanding of the events mentioned earlier, in which Russian criminal gangs were involved in the export of doping substances produced in Russia and the import of such substances that would then be sold to other countries <sup>10</sup>.

In November 2002, the head of Swedish anti-doping inspectors, Gunnar Hermansson, indicated: "*a group of gangs dedicated to traffic in doping hormones between Italy and Russia*" <sup>11</sup>.

We shall now go on to more recent events:

On 2 February 2004, an unprecedented episode occurred: Russian police provided indications to US colleagues enabling them to arrest a Russian trafficker who had introduced a significant number of anabolic steroid phials into the USA <sup>12</sup>.

On 16 March 2004, during a US Congress hearing, US DEA executives stated: "*Russian, Romanian and Greek nationals are significant traffickers of steroids and are responsible for substantial shipments of steroids entering the United States*" <sup>13</sup>. In November 2004, *Pravda* featured a long article entitled "*Mafia dominates Russian pharmaceutical companies*", which refers not only to the Russian Mafia but also to several foreign criminal organizations. In particular, the article highlighted the number of acquisitions operated by Indian pharmaceutical companies, namely Dr Reddy's Laboratories, already mentioned in the news for the acquisition of an important steroid producing plant in Mexico. The article continued: "*Reddy's won the bid for Biomed with an offer of 9,931 million dollars, which it then failed to pay, and destined this money for other purposes, thus causing Biomed damages estimated at 37.16 million dollars*". This same article also mentions the case of the petroleum magnate, Roman Abramovich, owner of the Chelsea football team, who, in a very short period of time, bought off several pharmaceutical industries and a vast network of pharmacies <sup>14</sup>.

The above-mentioned participation of several Indian pharmaceutical companies in this escapade can only be placed in relation to the sudden and surprising development of the Indian pharmaceutical industry that occurred after the multinational pharmaceutical companies, busily distributing their anabolic steroids to malnourished children, had occupied the market. It was a sort of relay: the multinational companies backed out, leaving the field to new Indian companies with an apparently different profile which would later not limit their steroid production to domestic "requirements" but, as detailed in other paragraphs, implement overproduction aimed at illegal export on a world scale <sup>15</sup>.

It has been said that Russian criminal gangs are able to sell doping substances even to those countries that produce them. On 1 December 2005, in one of its extremely rare actions against the traffic in doping substances, the Greek police force arrested a man in Thessaloniki, seizing 35,000 boxes of anabolic steroids,

corresponding to approximately 175,000 doses. The man had been in touch with exponents of Muscovite criminal gangs who were then discovered by the Russian authorities and accused of murder. In the eight months preceding the arrest, the Russian accomplices had sold him several million doses of anabolic steroids. The police also seized from the arrested man documentation detailing a huge number of parcels that had been sent to clients from the following ten countries: USA, Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Japan, Spain, the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia <sup>16</sup>.

This issue is rich in implications: a) a large number of countries are involved; b) in a country such as Greece, where anabolic steroids are produced, the dealer finds it more convenient to buy them in Russia; c) similarly, buyers in other producing countries, such as Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and, most of all, Spain also found this solution more convenient; d) there were also buyers from Saudi Arabia, one of the Gulf countries; this aspect is discussed further on, with a series of events that build up to well defined evidence.

More than once, the Finnish police confiscated large quantities of anabolic steroids and testosterone coming from Russia and found that this traffic was managed by ROC. Particularly significant is the case that occurred in June 2005 on the train from St. Petersburg to Helsinki: the seized substances had been produced in the Netherlands and Egypt, and were destined, via transit through Russia, for the black market in Finland and Sweden <sup>17</sup>.

Other significant cases showing the involvement of ROC and, more generally, Eastern European criminal organizations in the international traffic in doping substances are mentioned in other paragraphs.

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## 7. DOPING THE ASIAN WAY

This expression indicates the three countries whose role in the production and distribution of doping substances is particularly relevant, according to information concerning criminal investigations and the seizure of doping substances: Thailand, China and India. Quite a distance from these three, in terms of both production capacity and share of the illegal market, another two countries, Korea and Pakistan, may be mentioned. If, on top of these five countries, one considers Russia and its predominant role and the other Eastern European countries (in particular Ukraine, Lithuania, Romania, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia) with a considerable share of the illegal international market, it appears obvious that the macro-area of East Asia is the major source of worldwide doping. This observation, however, does not lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon because the political, economical, legal, commercial and technological differences in these twelve countries are quite outstanding.

If one looks at future prospects, the previous considerations referring to the features (competitive prices and good quality/price ratio) that favoured the development of Russia's predominant role in the illegal international market may be applicable in the near future to Thailand, China and India, as the cost of labour in these countries is even lower than in Russia and the other Eastern European countries.

A further distinction must be made between Thailand and the China-India duo. This section will show that Thailand has been, for many years, an economically favourable country in which to produce and export doping substances without control and these conditions have been exploited by powerful foreign investors. China and India, on the contrary, have certain qualities of enterprise, supported by extremely powerful criminal organizations with extensive branched systems, capable of establishing connections with international criminal organizations. China and India are enormous, densely populated countries and their GDP shows a 10% annual increase. Everything clearly suggests that, in the absence of specific international political agreements, these two countries will conquer a large share of the illegal doping market in the near future. With reference to the above-mentioned foreign investors who have been very active as regards the Russian and Thai pharmaceutical industry, nothing would prevent them from moving their capital to these two countries.

In India, it was mentioned earlier that foreign investments in the pharmaceutical industry did, in fact, begin some years ago, but this country's potential is such that there is room enough for further and even more substantial flow of capital. Such possibility is greater in China, which is just beginning to open up to foreign investors. It was no coincidence that WADA President Richard Pound, in his recent visit to China, expressly invited the Chinese Government and authorities to show, on an international level and before the 2008 Olympic Games, that they are sensitive to this issue by checking the ever increasing export of doping substances<sup>1</sup>.

## 7.1 Thailand

The Criminal Department of the Canadian Police issued a report entitled *"Drug Situation in Canada 2003"*, based on confiscations carried out by customs authorities between 2000 and 2003 (amounting to 2,442,538 doses), in which it listed the countries of origin of anabolic steroids by order of importance: Thailand is in first place, Poland second and China third <sup>2</sup>.

Data provided by Sweden for the European Union's 2003 report on organized crime indicated the following order of importance for the countries of origin of doping substances: Baltic States, Thailand, Greece and Spain <sup>3</sup>.

In the present context, the Baltic States is intended to indicate all the traffic that transits through Estonia but, in fact, comes from Russia. It is not surprising that Russian crime organizations dominate the neighbouring Scandinavian illegal traffic, but it is very significant that Thailand, a very distant extra-European country, has a large share of the illegal Swedish market, larger even than Greece and Spain.

Thailand appears again as the most important country of origin for the doping substances confiscated in 2004 in Finland by the customs authorities <sup>4</sup>.

On 5 September 2002, Yugoslav customs authorities seized about half a million doses of anabolic steroids sent by airmail from Thailand via Zurich. This issue is also a significant item because it suggests a Yugoslav black market dealing with a population of amateur athletes and body builders quite similar to that found in richer industrialized countries.

Also, the large-scale operation conducted in Spain by the Guardia Civil on 30 June 2004 leads back to Thailand; in this instance, several illegal plants producing doping substances were discovered and closed down. The Spanish and international organization at the head of this cartel had contacts with traffickers from several countries, including Thailand, and the active principle necessary for the production of these anabolic steroids probably came from Thailand <sup>5</sup>.

Thailand was again involved in a subsequent large-scale operation conducted a year later on 1 June 2005, in which the Spanish Guardia Civil discovered and closed down other clandestine plants and confiscated several hundred million doses of doping substances. Here again, the Spanish authorities discovered that the required active principles came from Thailand, Mexico and Brazil <sup>6</sup>.

The only known instance in which US and Thai authorities cooperated in an operation against illegal traffic in doping substances is the one that led to the arrest, in March 2003, of 22 individuals in Thailand and another six individuals in the USA involved in large-scale Internet sales, mainly destined for buyers in the USA <sup>7</sup>. The legal basis on which the Thai authorities proceeded to arrest these individuals is not clear, because if specific legal instruments did exist, one wonders why the Thai authorities never acted against the large-scale production of doping substances that has invaded the whole world. One also wonders why the US authorities,

in particular the US DEA, never requested similar cooperation from the Thai authorities in the countless other cases of illicit traffic in which Thailand clearly figured as the country of origin.

Thailand's leading role as a country of origin of doping substances is clearly stated in several crime reports and in the judicial acts of several countries (Australia, Denmark, France, Norway, Finland, Italy, etc.), as well as in crime reports issued by international institutions. For instance, the 2005 and 2006 International Narcotics Strategy Report, in the section dedicated to South East Asia, indicated that Thailand plays a significant role in the production of addictive substances, but also in the production of doping substances <sup>8</sup>.

## 7.2 India

India's role has already been discussed at length in the previous paragraphs describing how the production and traffic in doping substances has been going on in India for a long time, at least since the beginning of the 1980s (Duchaine, a bodybuilder and dealer, openly admitted that, in those years, he bought anabolic steroids from Great Britain and India) <sup>9</sup>.

Since then, India's continued presence on the doping black market is documented in several national reports issued from the 1990s through to the year 2000.

At present, India's role has further increased on account of the great development of the pharmaceutical industry. Most of the doping substances are certainly produced for export, as we may deduce from the fact that doping substances produced in India are listed on the most important black market catalogues in Ukraine, a real doping crossroads that no international body has as yet examined with the required attention. These same catalogues also list substances produced in Pakistan <sup>10</sup>.

The fact that best illustrates India's role in the illegal international doping market is certainly the result of a very complex investigation concluded on 22 April 2005 and carried out by the US DEA in cooperation with several national bodies from the USA and other countries, namely: 1) Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2) Federal Bureau of Investigation, Healthcare Fraud Unit; 3) Food and Drug Administration; 4) United States Postal Service; 5) Pharmaceutical and Chemical Coordination Unit, Narcotics and Dangerous Drug Section; 6) Australian Federal Police; 7) Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They uncovered extensive international trafficking implemented through the Internet (over 200 websites dispersed all over the world), through which Indian and US criminal organizations played an outstanding role in both trafficking of doping substances and complex financial transactions and, in some cases, also the coordination of criminal organizations in other countries.

Overall, between July 2003 and April 2005, this widespread international criminal network sold about 2.5 million doses of doping substances every month, which amounts to 30 million doses a year and about 55 million doses in the 22 months of its activities. During the same period, the US DEA confiscated six million US dollars and the paperwork documenting a large number of financial transactions involving banks in different



countries and continents. Among the countries involved in this triangular trade, Costa Rica, Singapore, the Channel Islands, Isle of Man, West Indies, Antigua, Ireland and Cyprus (as shall be seen further on, Cyprus features in several significant trafficking cases and appears as particularly convenient when it comes to transit or support, so the enormous robbery of EPO phials in Nicosia mentioned earlier must be examined in light of the Cyber Chase, which indicates that Cyprus has an ambiguous attitude as regards traffic in doping substances) <sup>11</sup>.

India was found to be the producing country of part of these doping substances, while the rest apparently came from Germany and Hungary. The doping substances thus collected were sent on to the USA and several other countries. In the USA, the traffic was managed directly by an Indian criminal clan that the investigators defined as the Bansal Organization.

Part of the money was cashed in Australia and the estimate of the total volume of the traffic, provided by the Australian Federal Police, is much greater, about 139 million dollars, 10 million of which were confiscated. There was a sequel to the Cyber Chase operation, with several arrests carried out in other countries <sup>12</sup>.

As shall be seen in more detail further on, a large part of the doping substances on the black market of the Gulf countries comes from India. Particularly significant is the case discovered by the Cyprus police on 24 January 2004 at Larnaca airport: a 49-year-old Indian, Sadik Haiderali, was found in possession of 8,060 phials of Sustanon (testosterone). He came from Bombay and was bound for London, but he had made intermediate stopovers in Sri Lanka and Dubai before a third stopover in Cyprus. Such a roundabout journey requires a number of considerations: a) this arrest for possession of doping substances was the first one performed in Cyprus and should be placed in relation with the health minister's public declaration on his country's involvement following the significant number of doping cases discovered in gyms in Nicosia and other cities; b) when he was arrested, the man showed the police authorities a declaration of possession of these phials stamped by the Dubai authorities; c) the stopover in Dubai, just like the one in Larnaca, was probably necessary to deliver part of the cargo, as there is no other likely explanation for such a tortuous journey <sup>13</sup>.

The as yet uninvestigated doping case discovered on 10 October 2002 at Chennai airport, in India, is surprising. Indian national Nazir ur Rehman was found in possession of a significant amount of anabolic steroids coming from Hong Kong (probably a stopover in the journey from China) and arrested, as he was believed to be the mind behind several similar cases <sup>14</sup>.

This is surprising because India produces steroids: why the need to import them from abroad? Or perhaps the seized substances were not anabolic steroids but testosterone or growth hormone? This occurrence needs to be further investigated because its overall meaning remains obscure: even if the seized substances were not anabolic steroids but substances not available on the Indian market, should one conclude that, also in India, a

very poor country, there are classes of buyers who want sophisticated pharmaceutical substances and are ready to pay much more than what they would pay for local products?

### 7.3 China

In a few words, one might say that China is the budding colossus of doping substances. This statement needs to be explained: the ever increasing number of investigations and confiscations that have occurred over the past three years indicate that China's involvement in the international doping black market is developing, although at present its share is distinctly lower than that occupied by Russian criminal organizations.

On 27 July 2006, Nikolai Durmanov, head of the Russian Olympic Committee's anti-doping agency, said at a news conference: *"Everyone knows perfectly well that the main producer of all these substances is China. We are between China and Europe, so if we don't have legislation to fight steroid trafficking, then those steroids will end up in Europe tomorrow. ... Russian anti-doping officials are facing a wider problem of steroid use in society at large, fuelled by a popular culture that emphasizes physical appearance"*. Although perhaps exaggerated, this evaluation by an important Russian anti-doping official remains significant as regards the importance of China's role in the doping black market <sup>15</sup>.

As mentioned earlier, China's future prospects must be examined in comparison with Russia. Which market could be better than the US market for such a comparison? Indeed, it is the market with the highest purchasing power, hemmed in on one side by doping substances imported by Russian criminal organizations and, on the other, by those easily imported on a daily basis from Mexico.

It is far from easy to find a place in this illegal market, also because the US DEA and police authorities actively counter it and, since the new law became effective in 2004, it has become more difficult and dangerous to introduce doping substances into the USA. This is only relatively so since, according to experts, doping is a minor priority for the US police and judicial system when compared with other offences. In brief, while it is not impossible to enter the US market, it remains difficult on account of competition from other criminal organizations whose place is already consolidated and requires some caution to avoid trouble with police authorities.

However, it must be said that, beginning in 2000, computer systems and technologies have made it much easier to manage this traffic through the Internet, and both Russian and Chinese criminal organizations have increasingly learnt to make better use of this opportunity.

The first clear indication of a significant Chinese presence on the US illegal doping market is dated November 2000, when Nicholas Hanson, an individual with a long criminal record, was arrested by the Postal Inspection Service and the Iowa State Police and charged with setting up and managing a clandestine plant for the production of anabolic steroids and growth hormone. To be exact, this plant produced and released on the

doping black market a counterfeit of Serostim patented by a Swiss multinational pharmaceutical company. Serostim and Serono will be discussed in detail further on; in the present context, it is sufficient to point out that Hanson and his accomplices bought the active principle for GH from China (through the Internet) and used it to produce counterfeit Serostim. Few details are available so we do not know if the active principle concentration was lower or equal to that of the original drug <sup>16</sup>.

The fact remains that, when Serono realized the great decrease in sales of Serostim, the company somehow signalled its alarm, thus setting in motion specific enquiries. The consequences for Serono itself shall also be seen further on! These enquiries brought to light other cases of counterfeit drugs and, in most of them, the active principle for GH had been acquired in China. In another affair, two individuals were charged with the counterfeit production of Serostim using GH bought in China. The counterfeit drug was then sold to body builders and other athletes. One of these two individuals agreed to cooperate with the investigators and confessed that they had bought growth hormone in China from 2000 to September 2001; they had then turned to a German company; more recently, they had gone back to buying GH in China <sup>17</sup>.

The “club HGH” website lists in great detail several cases in which growth hormone was acquired in China and then brought to the USA. The web masters sustain that the substance was tested and found to be absolutely pure and that the concentration of the active principle was perfectly identical to that of corresponding HGH-based drugs produced in the USA or Europe <sup>18</sup>.

The “Somatotropin” website even advertises a GH spray produced in China <sup>19</sup>.

The striking feature in all these investigations is the absence of the US DEA. Since 2000, all of these investigations were carried out by other police authorities.

It is of note that the only reference to China is contained in the 2005 report of the US State Department and refers to another country. Indeed, this report mentions that, in 2004 Swedish customs officials carried out the first confiscation of anabolic steroids in liquid state, coming from China. The Swedish customs officials had, in fact, seized about 57 litres of the active principle, enough to produce over one million doses <sup>20</sup>.

This lack of data on China in US DEA and State Department reports is indeed surprising, while the 2003 Canadian police report indicates China as the third most important in terms of countries of origin of doping substances seized <sup>21</sup>.

In the meantime, the Australian 2003-2004 report entitled “*Illicit Drug Data*” also indicates that doping substances produced in China reached Australia <sup>22</sup>.

Unexpectedly, other information concerning doping substances produced in China and sent to the USA comes from investigations and confiscations carried out in other countries; this was the case when an Englishman, James Southerland, a manager of several gyms, was found guilty in 2005 of large-scale traffic in doping substances coming from China and destined for the black market in Great Britain and the USA.

Data concerning China are increasingly frequent <sup>23</sup>.

On 25 March 2004, customs officials arrested a fireman, who was also bodybuilder and stripper in nightclubs, because he was found in possession of several packs of anabolic steroids and growth hormone, amounting to a total value estimated by the police at 347,000 dollars. The packs came from China and had been sent through the post. Here again, the transaction concerned (in part) GH, showing that Chinese criminal organizations that control illicit traffic are capable of exploiting the national pharmaceutical industry's capacity to produce this hormone <sup>24</sup>.

One wonders how, in a strictly state-controlled economy, it is possible that significant amounts of this very costly peptide hormone-based drug could be taken from a carefully calculated production.

On 16 May 2005, the Naples Prosecutor's Office seized several thousand doses of anabolic steroids for veterinary use and testosterone coming from various countries, including China <sup>25</sup>.

On 24 July 2005, the Carabinieri arrested the owner of a gym near Milan, found in possession of several thousand doses of ephedrine, anabolic steroids and testosterone; they also seized a large number of boxes of a testosterone-based ointment <sup>26</sup>.

On 25 July 2005, arrests were made in Norway when the customs police seized, at Oslo Airport, nine kilos of pure testosterone powder and about 1,000 packaged testosterone doses. The testosterone powder would have been sufficient for about 200,000 doses.

On 19 April 2006, the Prosecutor's Office of Torre Annunziata, near Naples, sequestered three gyms and confiscated a significant amount of anabolic steroids, some of which had come from China <sup>27</sup>.

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## 8. TRAFFICKING ON THE INTERNET

The Internet has in some ways “brought democracy” to the market of pharmaceutical substances but, at the same time, it has made this market infinitely more wild and dangerous: camouflaged behind the Internet, traffickers very often con buyers by selling them substances in which the active principle is at a much lower concentration than it should be, or even completely absent. The so-called online drugstores have brought suppliers dangerously close to potential buyers, who are attracted by promised miracles and uncomplicated procedures; they simply write down their credit card numbers and, with only a slight increase in pulse, press a button. A few days later, the miracle drug will be delivered directly to their homes, where they will consume it in secrecy.

The Internet has allowed traffickers of doping substances to keep a distance from the products. With the Internet, it is no longer necessary to load a truck with cartons of anabolic steroids and undertake a long journey open to the risk of being discovered. With the Internet, doping substances are left in the country in which they are produced, usually a secure country in which there are no laws, allowing the uncontrolled production and illegal marketing. Now, more than ever, for countries in which there are criminal laws against doping and investigations are carried out, the target should be to close down clandestine production plants.

However, since most of the doping substances come from countries in which there are no specific criminal laws and, certainly, no investigations taking place, it is all the more necessary to devise, promote and implement a strategy based on international agreements aimed at protecting public health. The development of online drugstores implies that national regulations concerning medicament consumption (therefore, not only the consumption of pharmaceutical substances with doping potential) may become mere enunciations.

But what international body is currently in a position to face a complex and vast issue such as the worldwide consumption of medications? On the other hand, it would be pointless to devise a strategy targeting only substances with doping potential, because it is impossible to distinguish the misuse of these substances from normal therapeutic use, and also because the production of doping substances is integrated in a system that produces innumerable other substances.

Furthermore, recent history indicates that the interests of pharmaceutical companies have often disregarded or crushed the individual right to health and safety protection. This has happened for substances with doping potential, as well as for other types of substances. Examples of such disruptive events are detailed in previous and subsequent paragraphs; they are always carried out to the detriment of poorer and less informed populations, even children, in various parts of the world. But they occurred even before Internet diffusion. Therefore, problems caused by the use of this instrument are only subsidiary to the basic, all-important

question: can the industrial production of pharmaceutical substances be assimilated to the production of other industrial products? Obviously, the answer can only be no. Indeed, if industrial and commercial competition principles, based at best on the quality/price ratio and at worst on publicity and improper marketing, were to be strictly applied also to medicines, pharmaceutical companies could blithely pursue a systematic increase in production so as to cut down unit cost.

In the end, this would mean that the *per capita* annual consumption of pharmaceutical substances would have to increase, with all the ensuing problems such as side effects and addictive effects. Alas, this perspective is very different from the actual situation.

No matter how depressing and discouraging, the study of the doping problem on a world scale and the possible strategies to counter its development invariably leads to an awareness of the entire issue of world pharmaceutical companies, the obscure structures of multinational pharmaceutical holdings, and the uncontrollable and increasingly vast shadow of world production. In recent years, experts and important government institutions have estimated the imbalance between the production of substances with doping potential (EPO, GH, testosterone) and the actual requirements of those patients treated with these substances. Such estimates are now meaningless: even if an accurate calculation of the official total production of pharmaceutical companies, for each type of medicament, were possible, who would ever be able, in the present situation, to calculate the huge clandestine production?

If the equivalent of the Prague Conference, organized by the US DEA in 1993, were to be organized today, it would involve a multifaceted political, scientific, economical and organizational scheme. In other words, an assembly resolutely supported by many countries and prepared by the combined efforts of the various competent international bodies. The official pharmaceutical industry would obviously be invited (certainly not the clandestine industry, although everybody knows that a significant portion of this illegal world would be hovering behind the legal one).

Continuing in this line of thought, one inevitably comes to consider the relationship between government institutions and pharmaceutical multinational companies (and multinational companies in general). But this would go well beyond the scope of the present dossier, since it would mean dealing with a more general and complex issue concerning the effective possibility that policies aimed at collective interests may prevail over party interests.

Every so often, experts who wish to lead uncomplicated lives come out with seemingly sensible “magical” solutions, such as liberalizing doping, which would mean liberalizing medications in general. This recurring proposal does possess one of the basic requirements of intelligent proposals: simplicity. Unfortunately, it lacks



all the other requirements since: a) it does not respect athletes who do not wish to resort to doping and would lead to their discrimination; b) it would trigger an uncontrollable build up since each athlete, not knowing the combination of substances his or her opponents are consuming, in great secrecy, would be tempted to try out increasingly dangerous combinations and dosages. In short, the proposal to liberalize doping reflects only the cynical attitude of those who express it and a formal conception of sports performances that become totally dissociated from the athletes who achieve them. Pantani is dead, but the videos of his erythropoietin-based races are still pointed out as a commercial and thrilling spectacle.

The incompetence, negligence or complicity of the public institutions that saved appearances but did little to counter the development of doping and the ensuing ever increasing international illicit traffic in doping substances certainly provides space for an intrinsically unintelligent proposal such as liberalization.

It has already been mentioned in a previous paragraph that police authorities and institutions involved in the battle against traffic in narcotics and doping substances should identify an efficiency index to monitor their work. Otherwise, everything will remain vague and foster passivity and ambiguity, giving way to those sectors of politicians, economists, media operators, sports executives and police authorities who are themselves consumers of narcotics and doping substances and wish to drag everyone else into the vortex. These sectors of the ruling classes, personally inextricably involved in these problems, have neither the right nor the capacity to take decisions that will influence the lives of future generations.

The problems connected to the Internet, this unmanageable and extreme doping flywheel, may therefore provide the occasion for opportune deliberation. Also, the very serious problem of paedophilia is as old as man, but the Internet has provided a powerful instrument for worldwide communication and favoured and multiplied perverse contacts. Yet large sectors of the judicial and police systems in many countries have resolutely faced up to paedophilia. Thanks to control systems and deterrent measures implemented by highly motivated investigators, paedophiles and, to a greater extent, traffickers of paedophilia, now have to be very careful when they chat online or promote their child market.

Several significant cases of traffic in doping substances via the Internet have been illustrated in previous paragraphs; others, illustrating different aspects of doping, are presented in the following paragraphs.

## 9. THE MILITARY, POLICE AUTHORITIES AND DOPING

It has already been mentioned in the second paragraph that important pharmaceutical substances with doping potential, namely stimulants and anabolic steroids, were specifically created in the 1940s to be administered to soldiers involved in armed combat. It was also mentioned that this type of doping very naturally progressed from soldiers to soldier-athletes, then to athletes in general and body builders. It was also pointed out that these circles – soldiers, other military and paramilitary personnel including police officers, warders and other police corps – are contiguous. One finds that athletes and body builders, soldiers and athletes, soldiers and body builders mix and come into close contact in particular gyms, in which each one observes and copies the other, and also finds a supply of doping substances. The Internet has, obviously, amplified emulation and made things easier because one can see “musclemen/women” all over the world and buy the substances they are supposed to have used to achieve this result.

Several researchers have observed that the diffusion of doping is particularly critical among the above-mentioned military and paramilitary classes and that this implies a number of serious consequences on the social level, as well as for public safety. It is a very delicate problem in which the roles have, in some ways, been reversed, in that the more sensitive sectors of the public examining this issue ended up questioning the role of those institutions in charge of maintaining law and order.

The diffusion of doping among the military has reached such proportions that it would deserve a dossier of its own. Here, therefore, only some of its aspects will be illustrated, in the hope that this may stimulate readers to continue on their own. An appropriate starting point could be a recent news item.

On 25 July 2005, the Trieste Postal Service Police announced that they had uncovered huge traffic in doping substances via the Internet: the substances had been stored in Trieste and sent through the post to buyers placing their orders via the Internet. Online commercials and orders had been managed by servers situated in Slovenia, Lithuania and Poland. The police confiscated 215,000 doses of doping substances in Trieste, but it was immediately evident – given the high number of countries of destination and the size of the organization – that the Eastern European criminal organization involved had trafficked, up to then, no less than five million doses. The European issue of *Stars and Stripes* gave a much higher estimate of the value of this traffic: 2.4 million dollars a month, which would amount to 24 million doses a year.

The police discovered this traffic after noticing that hundreds of parcels addressed to US soldiers in Iraq were returned undelivered, and found that they contained anabolic hormones. A subsequent investigation, carried out with great courage by Associated Press reporters, who spoke to superior army officers and other experts,

disclosed that the route from Trieste was not the only channel supplying US soldiers in Iraq and that the same problem also concerned US soldiers stationed in Afghanistan and other areas of the Middle East. This investigation further disclosed that soldiers also bought anabolic steroids from local dealers and that this unceasing quest for such doping substances was associated to the fact that, apart from the emotional and physical stress caused by prolonged stays in war zones, the soldiers were daily engaged in body building. The authors of this investigation (Emma Ross, physician and reporter from London, Jim Krane, correspondent from Dubai and the United Arab Emirates, Paul Garwood, correspondent from Cairo, and Dan Cooney, correspondent from Kabul, Afghanistan) compared these facts with marijuana consumption among US soldiers stationed in Vietnam 40 years ago. They also underlined that periodic controls carried out by US authorities focussed on narcotics and not doping substances <sup>1</sup>.

The Associated Press Report is confirmed in full by an article published in the Washington Times on 3 May 2004: *"Still, military officials acknowledged this week that disciplinary action had been taken against several Marines for using hashish and anabolic steroids last year while their unit was guarding the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan"* <sup>2</sup>.

The army officers minimized these circumstances and, in fact, never supplied satisfactory explanations, hiding behind the evergreen and very convenient military secrecy; therefore, serious doubts remain as regards the physical and mental condition of the military personnel engaged in tasks that are very delicate and dangerous (for themselves and for others).

As previously mentioned, several policemen were clients of the police officer Ralph Dols, an anabolic steroid consumer and dealer. But Dols was certainly not the only policeman involved in the traffic in doping substances. On 22 May 1997 (a few months before Ralph Dols was murdered), the FBI arrested 20 individuals, two of whom were members of the Italo-American Lucchese Mafia clan and 11 warders, and charged them with heroine and anabolic steroids trafficking, also among prisoners of the Brooklyn Detention Centre in New York, for an overall value of two million dollars <sup>3</sup>. This case should have raised questions as to the conditions in which these prisoners performed their body building sessions in gyms and the degree of their physical and mental addiction to anabolic steroids. But no authority intervened. Since then, the situation has greatly deteriorated.

The following news items are a selection of the most important cases occurring over the past five years, taken from a much vaster record.

On 12 March 2001, two police officers of the Los Angeles District were arrested for illegal import and traffic in anabolic steroids. The authorities treated this case with great discretion and leniency and this caused strong reactions and protests <sup>4</sup>.

On 14 April 2001, Wyatt Kepley, a body builder and the son of the commissioner of Davidson County, was detained at San Diego airport because he was found in possession of a million dollars' worth of anabolic steroids. Backed by his father, he subsequently caused serious problems for the authorities when they tried to charge him and, only much later, found that quite a number of county policemen were among his clients. The case caused great sensation on account of the extent of corruption discovered and the use of physical intimidation on behalf of the policemen who not only consumed anabolic steroids but were also involved in traffic in ecstasy, cocaine and marijuana <sup>5</sup>.

On 6 May 2001, a captain of the US Air Force was arrested for traffic in doping substances (anabolic steroids and growth hormone), which he had bought in Mexico when travelling there on duty.

On 1 June 2002, the army's Centre for Programmes Against Substance Abuse and GHQ circulated a booklet among soldiers; it was particularly revealing as regards the diffusion of doping substances among the military because one of its four pages was dedicated to the explanation of the risks associated to anabolic steroid use.

On 18 July 2002, after several investigations had demonstrated that anabolic steroid use was widely diffused in the army and aimed at *increasing strength, endurance and self awareness*, Colonel Terry McCullagh declared: "*The involvement of army personnel in consumption of illegal substances, including anabolic steroids, is not compatible with their status. These substances reduce operational capacities and health; they are risky and jeopardize the safety of our soldiers*". The colonel worried only about the safety of his soldiers and did not consider the safety of other people with whom they might be dealing. Nonetheless, this statement remains significant <sup>6</sup>.

In 2002, the Ground Warrior Online Mag website published a thorough article on the abuse of anabolic steroids among Marines and detailed injuries caused by self-administration observed in many of these users.

On 28 May 2003, a police officer, also a body builder, was charged with trafficking growth hormone (Serostim phials, seemingly original) and anabolic steroids <sup>7</sup>.

On 7 June 2003, the annual body building championships for men and women were held at Bowie State University; only members of the police and the fire department were admitted, including those no longer in active service <sup>8</sup>.

In March 2004, the US DEA published and distributed a pamphlet entitled *Steroid abuse by law enforcement personnel*, in response to the great number of cases of consumption and traffic in anabolic steroids and other doping hormones among policemen and other law enforcement personnel.

On 10 September 2004, Der Spiegel's online edition described the paramilitary forces stationed in Afghanistan with the CIA's special forces as "*icons of extreme muscles*" and compared them to the film Rambo, featuring Sylvester Stallone.

On 3 January 2005, five Air Force Academy cadets were charged with traffic in anabolic steroids and tried by a military court; however, the heavy sentences requested by the prosecution were changed to a simple reprimand on account of irregularities in the investigation procedures <sup>9</sup>.

On 4 February 2005, Associated Press reporter Sean Murphy, commenting on the arrest of a police officer for traffic in anabolic steroids, wrote: *"Police officers in Mississippi, Ohio, Connecticut, Hawaii, Colorado, Alabama, Florida, Arkansas and New York have recently been sentenced for offences connected to anabolic steroid use, and very often they were also charged with traffic"*<sup>10</sup>.

On 5 February 2005, four police officers in Oklahoma State were expelled for use and traffic in anabolic steroids. On that same day, five firemen and an unspecified number of policemen were charged for use and traffic in anabolic steroids. <sup>11</sup>.

On 28 February 2005, the military court dismissed an Air Force Academy cadet and sentenced him to forced resettlement for traffic in anabolic steroids inside the academy and also outside in different parts of the USA. The same court later pardoned him when he admitted these offences. This case is revealing in terms of the military authorities' attitude to this problem <sup>12</sup>.

On 2 March 2005, two warders were found guilty of traffic in anabolic steroids illegally imported from Egypt <sup>13</sup>.

On 20 April 2005, Pennsylvania University Professor Philip J. Sweitzer published an essay on the diffusion of doping among police and armed forces entitled *"Drug law enforcement in crisis: cops on steroids"*, which contained no less than 189 different reference sources <sup>14</sup>.

From 11 April to 30 November 2006, in the Boca Raton Police Department, another six cases of police officers involved in anabolic steroid traffic were discovered <sup>15</sup>.

On 23 May 2005, an ABC report reviewed several court cases in which policemen and warders had been involved in anabolic steroid traffic. The report went over 18 cases involving policemen, sheriffs and warders <sup>16</sup>.

On 23 September 2005, five warders in Tallahassee, North Florida, were charged with traffic in anabolic steroids, in pill and liquid state, illegally imported from Egypt and sold to prisoners. One of these five warders had worked in Egypt as a body guard two years before and, at that time, had come into contact with local dealers <sup>17</sup>.

In November 2005, the Left Independent website, very active in the defence of human and civil rights, reported several cases in which policemen and soldiers had been involved in the use of, and often also traffic in, anabolic steroids, and commented: *"Law suit settlements involving police burning down homes and beating up innocents is only punctuated by the still unresolved homicide of a police training officer inside the Easton police department. All of these are the types of incidents common to steroid abuse, roid rage"* <sup>18</sup>

On 20 December 2005, 13 West Palm Beach policemen were investigated because they were regular anabolic steroid consumers. One of them was also charged with traffic in anabolic steroids and growth hormone <sup>19</sup>.

A few days later, four warders were found in possession of anabolic steroids and accused of traffic within the prison premises. <sup>20</sup>

On 8 April 2006, the confiscation of a set of documents on the premises of the Powermedia pharmaceutical company triggered a Food and Drug Administration investigation, which revealed extensive traffic in anabolic steroids and growth hormone involving several policemen who consumed these substances and sold them to many fellow policemen. The investigation focused on this company will subsequently uncover several other cases <sup>21</sup>.

On 1 May 2006, 12 West Palm Beach policemen who bought anabolic steroids and growth hormone from a drugstore under surveillance by federal agents were suspended from service for 10 days. This news item requires no further comment, also because these 12 policemen had committed a much more serious offence: during an investigation, they had protected the Powermedia pharmaceutical company <sup>22</sup>.

On 31 May 2006, in Jacksonville, a warder was condemned to a five-year sentence for traffic in anabolic steroids, which he had sold to fellow warders and prisoners. In this same department, another 10 police officers were involved in cases of anabolic steroid traffic <sup>23</sup>.

On 23 June 2006, an article was published by the Saint Petersburg Times dealing with the serious problem of warders who introduce narcotics and doping substances, and suggested that warders should be searched at the beginning and end of their shifts <sup>24</sup>.

On 12 July 2006, six policemen were accused of having protected friends who patronized the same gym and were involved in criminal activities and traffic in heroine and anabolic steroids. They had also ensured that the gym would not be searched <sup>25</sup>.

On 14 July 2006, six policemen were arrested for traffic in cocaine, Oxycontin and anabolic steroids <sup>26</sup>.

On 21 July 2006, three Boston police officers were arrested in Miami and accused of accepting large amounts of money to protect traffic in cocaine and also, it soon appeared, anabolic steroids. The judge, Michael J. Sullivan, expressed his dismay and stated: "The offences these policemen are accused of are really frightening and an insult to honest policemen." A few days later, a fourth policeman was charged with the same offences <sup>27</sup>.

On 4 October 2006, the Lee County Sheriff dismissed two warders and incriminated a third for involvement in anabolic steroid traffic. Two of them already had records for similar offences. Their superiors underlined the fact that they were losing two experienced warders who they would have difficulty replacing <sup>28</sup>.

On 24 October 2006, in Richmond, Virginia, a police officer was found guilty and the sentence will be issued on 18 January 2007. The officer faces three to five years' imprisonment and a 250,000-dollar fine for the illegal sale of anabolic steroids to other police officers<sup>29</sup>.

On 2 November 2006, a captain, three lieutenants and eight policemen of the sheriff's office in Virginia were accused of traffic in cocaine, marijuana, steroids and firearms<sup>30</sup>.

Innumerable articles and testimonies denounce omissions and complaisance on behalf of the US police corps, which for many years covered up incidents relating to policemen who lost control on account of anabolic hormone abuse and were involved in trafficking.

Thanks to the courage of a few reporters and university professors, this very serious issue was gradually brought to the attention of the wider public and the military authorities, which were compelled to take action. Once the new law against doping substances was passed, many more cases of policemen, warders, soldiers and even firemen involved in the use of and traffic in these substances were uncovered. There was no other alternative since, according to experts, about 20-25% are habitual consumers of anabolic steroids and other hormones!<sup>31</sup>

Such terrifying diffusion makes one wonder what the situation is among policemen and soldiers in other countries. Before answering this question, another should be asked: in which countries are doping offences the object of investigations and court cases? Once again, this very simple axiom holds true: where there are no investigations, there can be no culprits.

Along with the United States, the only countries in which, apart from customs controls, there is also significant police and judicial activity against doping are Canada, Australia, Italy and Sweden.

As regards Canada, the Canadian Centre for Ethics and Sport Bulletin, issued in December 2003, with reference to the situation in Canada and North America in general, stated: "*at present, over a million North Americans are on anabolic steroids, among them athletes, policemen, firemen, bouncers, soldiers and other military*".

In Australia, several significant cases of warders involved in anabolic steroid traffic have been reported<sup>32</sup>.

Other cases have also been reported in Great Britain, Austria and Cyprus<sup>33</sup>.

In Italy, since the new anti-doping law became effective (December 2000), quite a number of cases similar to those that occurred in the USA were discovered<sup>34</sup>.

As regards Sweden, on the contrary, there is no indication of the involvement of policemen and soldiers.

One may, therefore, presume that the problem of doping substance abuse among soldiers and policemen is present also in other countries, although maybe to a lesser degree.

For instance, in July 2001, Prague Radio announced: "*Four armed men suspected of drug trafficking have been arrested in Prague. The four men, all aged between 20 and 28, have been charged with the production and distribution of two banned substances, ephedrine and pervitin. One of the four men is said to be a*

*member of Prague's police force. The other three men are apparently body builders, with contacts among the Russian Mafia. Ephedrine can be used to produce pervitin, a home-made narcotic, and is also used in the production of illegal steroids for athletes".*<sup>35</sup>

Also in Kuwait, policemen are considered a population at risk when it comes to anabolic steroid consumption<sup>36</sup>.

There would be no point concealing the consequences of such involvement by law enforcement personnel: 1) an altered mental condition that may jeopardize, during service, self-control and deliberation especially in situations of particular danger and stress; 2) an obvious risk that investigations focused on traffic in doping substances may be inadequately conducted and concluded.

The cases uncovered in the USA involving military and paramilitary personnel are sufficient to understand that this type of traffic is never particularly complex, unlike those cases that typically emerge after long and arduous investigations. In the few cases in which investigations were indeed complicated, it was later discovered that policemen involved in doping had tried to sidetrack and delay them. As in the USA, investigations in Italy have also been obstructed in some instances, more or less effectively, by policemen involved in doping. It is safe to assume that the same has occurred in every other country to a degree directly related to the number and percentage of policemen who consume and deal in doping substances.

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## 10. DOPING AND ARAB GULF COUNTRIES

In July 2005, the Trieste Postal Service Police concluded an investigation that also branched out into Iraq, a country close to the Gulf. Furthermore, when Associated Press reporters followed up information concerning US soldiers that had emerged from the Trieste investigation, it appeared that they had also been supplied by local dealers. This fact immediately raises the following question: where did these dealers get their supplies? It may be possible to provide a plausible answer on the basis of other, surprising, cases of traffic in doping substances involving an area that had never been considered as a possible doping market.

On 6 April 2005, the home page of the official website of the Arab Emirates Ministry of Information and Culture featured the following item: *“Jordan and Dubai police authorities seize 27 million Dh worth of steroids”*. The details are that the Jordan police received information concerning a huge load of anabolic steroids transported on two trucks coming from an East European country and travelling along a route that had taken them across Turkey and Syria. The police stopped one of the trucks at the border and allowed the other one to continue to Dubai across Saudi Arabia. The Jordan police alerted the Saudi Arabian authorities as well as the authorities in Dubai. The Jordan authorities also specified that the anabolic steroids confiscated from the first truck had been destined for Saudi Arabia, while those in the second truck, seized by the Dubai police, had been destined for the Arab Emirates and other Gulf countries. The authorities of the two countries that had seized the steroids (in all 2,700,000 doses) and arrested the truck drivers declared that the traffic had been organized by an international gang including nationals of various Arab states and of the country of origin of the doping substances, and that similar confiscations had already been carried out <sup>1</sup>.

Thorough research reveals two very significant facts:

- a) The Arab Emirates authorities had, as early as 2003, signalled their alarm regarding the diffusion of doping in gyms and the large quantities of doping substances illegally imported into the country;
- b) A similar case had already occurred a few years before in Jordan when a large batch of anabolic steroids was seized.

In fact, in August 2000, the Jordan police seized an even higher number of doses of the same substance that was later seized in April 2005 (a clear sign, among other things, that the buyers in this market are creatures of habit and relatively stable): in all, 3,341,400 doses. This time, however, the substance was mistaken for a stimulant coming from Turkey, Syria and Lebanon. Most probably, these were the countries through which the doping substances had transited, also because it does not seem very likely that a substance produced in three different countries would then be assembled into a single batch for transport. As regards the (presumed) mistake in identifying the type of pharmaceutical substance, it might have been due to a lack of experience on

the part of the Jordan police, who were probably not aware, at that time, of the large variety of doping substances available. One may, therefore, suppose that the substances seized in August 2000, after an identical journey, also came from the same Eastern European country as those seized five years later <sup>2</sup>.

It would be strange indeed if the Jordan police had intercepted the only two batches (identical as regards typology of substances) dispatched over a period of five years; several other dispatches must have occurred at regular intervals between 2000 and 2005 to satisfy the requirements of this region's market. At least five or six dispatches per year of about three million doses means that the traffic in anabolic steroids in the Arab Gulf countries between 2000 and 2005 would have amounted to 90-120 million doses.

Statements and official documents issued by the Arab Emirates authorities certainly indicate a very serious situation:

On 7 September 2003, the health minister, taking into consideration the potential dangerousness of these doping substances and their increasing diffusion, due also to uncontrolled sales in pharmacies and gyms, issued a decree regulating the import and sale of these substances <sup>3</sup>.

On 5 November 2003, the health minister issued a new decree forbidding the import of a series of pharmaceutical substances for veterinary use, which were also administered to human beings <sup>4</sup>.

On 18 July 2005, only a few weeks after the above-mentioned confiscation carried out in cooperation with the Jordan police authorities, that is, in a situation of great alarm emphasized by the government authorities, police authorities at Abu Dhabi airport seized a large number of phials and pills of anabolic steroids and testosterone coming from India <sup>5</sup>.

On the following day, 19 July 2005, the health minister closed down a number of the capital's gyms, which would have received the substances seized at the airport <sup>6</sup>.

On 27 July 2005, the Government of the Arab Emirates, greatly alarmed by the diffusion of this problem, indicated that it would issue a specific anti-doping law <sup>7</sup>.

On 30 July 2005, the health minister expressed his concern for the significant amount of doping substances illegally imported into the country, mainly from India, China and Switzerland <sup>8</sup>.

On 13 January 2006, a survey of gym-goers confirmed that the black market of doping substances also flourishes in the Arab Emirates <sup>9</sup>.

On 1 June 2006, it transpired that Claude Covassi, a Thai boxing specialist, who had been arrested a few months previously for the illegal import of doping substances, was in fact a spy for the Swiss Government, trained to infiltrate Islamic extremist circles <sup>10</sup>.

On 13 October 2006, a significant confiscation of doping substances was made known with no specification of place or date <sup>11</sup>.

On 15 October 2006, the daily newspaper, Gulf News, published the terrible results of an investigation conducted in 18 national gyms: 22% of the patrons were using doping substances <sup>12</sup>.

Three considerations appear necessary:

1) These facts show that the doping problem extends worldwide, as is normal in a global village; this mania concerns every country, to a degree that varies according to each country's income; one cannot expect doping to be widely diffused in the poorer countries, but it would be a great mistake to consider that, in such countries, the conditions necessary for the development of this phenomenon do not exist. Even in many Central African countries with very low incomes, there are body building competitions and there is a market for doping substances: a brief search through the Internet provides immediate proof.

2) In Arab Gulf countries, thanks to petroleum, citizens have a reasonable per capita income and access to more and more globalized information; the facts described above prove, not that such proof is really necessary, that neither religious nor ethnic diversity, nor geographical position, represent a barrier capable of limiting the diffusion of doping. Arab Gulf countries have been supplied with doping substances through at least five channels: Trieste (Eastern Europe), the Turkey-Syria-Lebanon-Jordan route (Eastern Europe), India, China and Switzerland. There may also be others.

3) The very significant amount of anabolic steroids seized in April 2005 was destined for various Arab Gulf countries, but it may well be that the steroids were in some way connected with the substances that, according to the Associated Press report, US soldiers obtain with great ease from local dealers during their inspection tours in the territory.



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## 11. WESTERN EUROPE'S ROLE

Western European countries are distinguished by a standard of living that is among the highest in the world and by a close mutual resemblance that comes from intense interchanges of culture and lifestyles, favoured by proximity and their belonging to the European Union. Also, doping development follows similar trends in all these countries, although some do not notice or prefer not to notice.

On the whole, Western European countries tend to be consumers rather than producers and exporters of doping substances, except for Spain and Greece which, over the past few years, have produced and exported more than they could possibly have consumed. Available data do not clearly indicate the situation in Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain.

Several significant confiscations carried out in different European countries, in which investigators managed to identify the destination of these doping substances, allow for a better understanding of the dynamics of such trafficking.

### 11.1 An important confiscation in Vienna

On 26 January 2002, after an investigation conducted over several months in conjunction with the German police, Austrian customs officials seized three tons of anabolic steroids in Vienna and Thule. Among the traffickers, all nationals of the Czech Republic and one German, there were also two agents of the Viennese special squad, known as the Wega, who confessed immediately. The substances came from the Czech Republic and were destined for several European countries, including the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden and Spain.

It must be said that three tons of anabolic steroids are equivalent to 60,000,000 doses <sup>1</sup>.

### 11.2 Serious concern in Great Britain and Germany

On 13 September 2006, the results of the research charity, Drug-Scope, were made public: it appeared that 250,000 British citizens are regular users of doping substances. The same study indicated that, in 11 out of 20 large cities, the diffusion of steroids among the young population is relatively high and, on average, 9% of gym-goers consume them. The most frequent users are sport practitioners, body builders, bouncers and bodyguards. Lastly, it indicated that the diffusion of anabolic steroids among teenagers is lower than cannabis and amphetamines but higher than cocaine and heroin. Even if one does not consider the huge seizure of anabolic steroids in South Africa, which was equal to the amount of cannabis seized but higher than the amount of cocaine and heroin, many countries indicate that doping substances are in third to fourth place

among seized substances. Recently, Thurston County (one of 311 US counties) classified the illegal substances seized as follows:

1. Cannabis	\$ 4,076,249
2. Anabolic steroids	\$ 1,607,600
3. Methamphetamines	\$ 239,576
4. Hallucinogens	\$ 111,253
5. Ecstasy	\$ 94,275
6. Cocaine	\$ 44,791
7. Heroin	\$ 16,490

These examples bring to the surface the recurrent question of this survey: how can one monitor the extent of the traffic in doping substances if in many countries it is not considered an offence while, in others, it is given low priority? The profound changes in the illegal market of forbidden substances are now clear: a) the progressive prevalence of abuse of illegal substances (mainly barbiturates consumed without prescription or treatment requirement, but also anabolic hormones and other doping substances) over abuse of natural substances; b) the progressive prevalence of “uppers” (cocaine, ecstasy, anabolic hormones, stimulants) over other substances that do not have this effect <sup>2</sup>.

### 11.3 Belgium is found to be the crossroads of doping in Europe

On 23 July, the Belgian police seized 550 kg of anabolic hormones, most of them packed in very expensive phials. According to police estimates, the commercial value of these substances amounted to 136 million euros, far higher than the value of any other confiscation conducted in Europe. Three people were arrested. In Belgium, anabolic steroids are listed among forbidden substances, and this enabled the police to seize the batch. Investigators declared that the substances were destined for six European countries and subsequently managed to identify a number of these countries: Sweden, Spain and a third non-identified Mediterranean country. They also ascertained that the steroids were destined for gyms and that, during the months preceding the seizure, several other, similar, batches had been dispatched but had not been intercepted <sup>3</sup>.

This information sheds light on the enormous amount of doping substances consumed every year; it appears that the number of batches not intercepted by the police was quite significant. Assuming the substances were dispatched at least every three months, so as to ensure the requirements of consumers, the total would amount to 50,000,000 to 60,000,000 doses. It is surprising that Spain appeared among the destination countries; this circumstance was confirmed by the Spanish media, which associated it to the fact that liquid

testosterone is known to be used in clandestine laboratories for the production of counterfeit pharmaceutical substances.

#### 11.4 A clandestine production plant is discovered in Great Britain

On 4 August 2003, the British police sequestered a clandestine plant for the production of anabolic steroids and arrested the man who owned it under a false name. Both the investigation and the ensuing criminal sentence were made possible by a law, passed in 2002, which included anabolic hormones among forbidden substances. The data on this plant's production capacity were not made public; the police only announced that they had seized a significant amount of steroids; however, one may assume, on the basis of the very high bail requested, that they probably seized several million doses <sup>4</sup>.

#### 11.5 It is time to bring the fight against illegal addictive substances up to date

In December 2003, the International Journal of Drug Policy published a thought-provoking article: research carried out over 10 years (from 1991 to 2001) in British centres providing assistance to drug addicts using hypodermic syringes indicated that anabolic steroid consumers had increased six-fold and that "anabolic steroid *addicts*" now represented the largest group, even larger than heroin addicts <sup>5</sup>.

Research published by the Drug-Scope charity in September 2006 indicated a further increase: for example, in Liverpool, from 1994 to 2006, the users of anabolic steroids assisted by drug addiction centres had increased from 28 to over 500 <sup>6</sup>.

#### 11.6 A policy change in Spain

Even the 2005 *Counterfeit Drugs in Europe* report featured the following news item: in March 2005, on the premises of a fake plant for the production of dietetic products, the Guardia Civil seized a huge amount of counterfeit doping substances, including very expensive hormones such as growth hormone and erythropoietin. The active principles were imported from Eastern Europe and the USA and were then processed to produce counterfeit drugs to be sold in Spain and other countries. In all, 500,000 doses ready for the market, 375,000 empty phials and 1.2 million labels were seized. The Guardia Civil estimated the overall value of seized products at six million euros. The estimate of the yearly flow of doping substances, based on the large quantity of empty phials and labels, amounted to 20-30 million doses of over 10 distinct products ranging from growth hormone to testosterone to anabolic steroids to EPO <sup>7</sup>.

On 30 June 2004, the Guardia Civil dismantled a criminal organization that trafficked doping substances through the Internet, including stimulants, anabolic substances, anabolic substances for veterinary use, clenbuterol, masking agents for anti-doping tests and GHB, a doping substance highly prized in the USA but

less well known in Europe. A relatively significant amount of each of these substances was seized; no details were given but, from the number of clients (several thousand), one may presume that this criminal organization (whose members came from the following countries: Mexico, Thailand, Chile, Venezuela and Ecuador) trafficked several million doses a year. The substances came from Mexico and the counterfeit drugs were marketed in Spain, the USA and Italy <sup>8</sup>.

#### 11.7 A second clandestine plant is discovered in Great Britain

On 14 November 2004, the British police seized a clandestine plant for the production of Viagra, tranquillizers and anabolic steroids, with a daily production capacity of half a million doses. This item was included in the 2005 *Counterfeit Drugs in Europe* report, because drugs produced in unlicensed plants are always considered counterfeits (even more so, in the case of clandestine plants). Even with a cautious estimate for anabolic steroids, considering them as occupying a lesser share of the production, the total comes to about 50,000 doses a day and approximately 20 million doses a year. Investigators explained that the plant was managed by an international criminal organization, so one may assume that the products were not destined only for the British market, but also for others. The *Times* reported that the total value of the seized substances amounted to about six million pounds <sup>9</sup>.

#### 11.8 A clandestine plant is discovered in Moscow

In January 2005, an unprecedented operation conducted by the Russian police led to the discovery and sequestration of a clandestine plant for the production of anabolic steroids. It was situated a few kilometres outside Moscow and officially produced dietary supplements for athletes. This information is significant because doping substances illegally produced in Russia are marketed mainly in Western Europe.

The police acted in compliance with article 234 of the Russian Criminal Code, which forbids *illegal commerce, for profit, of pharmaceutically active substances*. The Russian authorities specified that the plant's production capacity was "only" 200,000 anabolic steroid pills every two to three hours. The word "only" refers to the fact that the plant had been working with a single machine, which had been acquired in Ukraine.

Despite the single machine, this plant's illegal production amounted to 170 million doses a year, strictly controlled by the Russian criminal organizations and for the most part exported. This chance discovery of doping substances, albeit very significant, has certainly not destroyed the Russian black market. On the contrary, it raises a question as to the number of clandestine plants with a production capacity equal to or higher than the one discovered near Moscow, operating in Russia and throughout the former Soviet Union. For one of the republics, Ukraine, there is an indirect answer: if Russia buys the machines for producing anabolic steroids from Ukraine, it means that Ukraine has produced and probably still produces a lot of these machines,

some of which are used for “domestic requirements”, while the others are sold to foreign clients. With a production rhythm of nearly 200 million doses per year and per machine, no more than 10 machines would produce two billion doses, enough to cover the yearly supply of about two million consumers.

These figures provide a very serious picture, but the actual situation is even worse, if one considers that the Ukrainian black market, easily available on the Internet, offers a very rich catalogue of doping substances with a wide variety of products, as well as a vast choice of country of origin. Apart from the huge domestic production, ranging from anabolic steroids to testosterone, stimulants, growth hormone (produced by a company named Biopharm), Ukrainian catalogues offer growth hormone produced in China and anabolic steroids produced in Turkey, Romania, Germany, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Egypt, the Netherlands, Greece, Poland, Great Britain, Spain, Iran, Slovakia, the USA, India and Russia. As can be seen, it is an indescribable Babel, where consumers prefer anabolic steroids or growth hormone produced in foreign countries to those produced in their own countries <sup>10</sup>. As mentioned earlier, a quality difference does exist; it is particularly evident in the catalogues of poorer countries, in which it can be seen that a drug produced in Holland costs three times as much as the same drug produced in Egypt.

#### 11.9 Spain inflicts a heavy blow on traffic in doping substances

On 1 June 2005, the Guardia Civil concluded a thorough investigation including a vast operation against traffic in doping substances, with the result that six clandestine plants were closed down in the region of Catalonia. Their production capacity was about 20,000 doses an hour of anabolic steroids and other hormones used for doping and drugs used in cancer treatment. The required active principles for the different substances were acquired on the international black market. During this operation, the Guardia Civil seized about 30 million packaged doses and 10 tons of pills, the equivalent of about 400 million doses. Seventy people were arrested in 13 Spanish provinces; several parcels coming from Greece and Turkey were found to contain active principles. The investigators identified other countries of origin of the active principles: Mexico, Brazil and Portugal. The Guardia Civil also declared that most of these substances were to be delivered to gyms <sup>11</sup>.

This is the most important police operation conducted in Europe against doping. It sheds light on the dynamics regulating international trafficking and confirms information coming from previous operations conducted in Spain and other European countries:

- 1) National criminal organizations are perfectly capable of establishing international agreements aimed at the same criminal business; this allows them to collect a wide range of doping substances that will then be sold on the black market, to buy active principles in the countries that sell them at the lowest prices, and to establish, through the Internet, a diffused commercial network to distribute these substances worldwide;
- 2) This very important police operation is also mentioned in the 2005 *Counterfeit Drugs in Europe* report <sup>12</sup>; this document duly reports such cases but, because it distinguishes between original and counterfeit drugs,

there is the risk that it may represent an incomplete and misleading point of reference for an analysis of doping for the following reasons: a) the immense black market of doping substances includes both original and counterfeit products; b) evidence suggests that multinational pharmaceutical companies own or have interests in pharmaceutical companies in Thailand, Mexico and many other developing countries that supply active principles to clandestine plants operating in industrialized countries; c) the distinction between original and counterfeit drugs, certainly unexceptional from a formal or legal outlook, may conceal the above-mentioned connection between “official” pharmaceutical companies and the archipelago of countless clandestine plants.

3) In the six clandestine plants that it discovered, the Guardia Civil seized 430 million doses of doping substances, which were the stock necessary to satisfy requirements for that particular period of time (one month, or maybe two or three, it is impossible to say); it is presumed that the criminal organization intercepted by the Guardia Civil trafficked over one billion doses a year! This means that this single portion of the world black market alone served about one million regular consumers of doping substances.

4) It is significant and thought provoking that France also figures among the countries definitely identified as countries of destination, besides Italy and Portugal. Whereas in Italy police operations are relatively frequent, although always insufficient, in France, confiscations by the Gendarmerie or customs officials can be counted on the fingers of one hand and the amount of substances seized is never significant. Spectacular anti-doping operations conducted by the Gendarmerie during the Tour de France are certainly welcome, but safeguarding public health from the risks deriving from illicit traffic should always be given priority. The same applies to Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands and other European countries.

5) Finally, a last comment on Spain. After many years of inaction, the new Zapatero government has faced the problem, both politically and judicially, with great determination <sup>13</sup>.

However, it is obvious that a decrease in illegal export from Spain will be immediately replaced by other illegal markets unless synergic action is implemented by international police organizations such as Interpol, Europol and Eurojust.

#### 11.10 Greece and the myth of Olympia

Several US DEA reports from the 1990s onwards indicate that, on the basis of confiscations of doping substances, Greece repeatedly appears as country of origin <sup>14</sup>. The same observation comes from police authorities of countries in which anti-doping investigations, however limited, are carried out, namely: Sweden, France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Australia and Canada. Even websites on which doping substances are advertised and sold always mention several types of anabolic steroids produced in Greece. In November 2005, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) analysed the market of several countries with reference to *availability of anabolic steroids without prescription* and mentioned Greece <sup>15</sup>.

Only very few voices were raised in Greece to denounce the country's involvement in traffic in doping substances and the phenomenon's increasing diffusion in Greek sports circles. Among these voices was that of the reporter Filippos Syrigos, who also reported on several corruption cases in sports circles. When the reporter was assaulted in the heart of Athens, it is difficult to establish who may have commissioned this act <sup>16</sup>. An explicit and authoritative accusation came from Dimitris Vagionas, the president of the national drugs control organization, who declared on 15 April 2005: *"It is unacceptable that Greece should be among the countries with the highest export of doping substances"*. When Vagionas appeared before the Parliamentary Investigation Committee on doping – established following the scandal that involved the two sprinters Kenteris and Thanou – he declared that *"a laboratory near Corinth produces 1.4 million boxes of anabolic steroids a year"* (the equivalent of 15-20 million doses). He also promised that he would reveal other such cases but, since he was also threatened, he may have changed his mind <sup>17</sup>.

#### 11.11 France, Germany and Great Britain and the fight against traffic in doping substances

The anti-doping law passed in France, even after the 2006 modifications, continues to give secondary importance to the traffic in doping substances and focuses mainly on middle- to high-level athletes and doping tests, as if these very costly procedures, which are often not even particularly effective, could be of any use to the millions of amateur athletes or the younger age groups.

Germany does not even have an anti-doping law and, when some members of parliament proposed one, the high-level sports lobby convinced everyone that such a law was not necessary, since urine tests were sufficient to counter doping. Also in this country, the emphasis is on the protection of high-level sports, but nobody thinks about adequately protecting the public health against the increasingly serious risks associated with doping among general sports practitioners.

In Great Britain, no one is aiming at the introduction of an anti-doping law but, worse still, nobody has taken into consideration recent events concerning traffic in doping substances or the research carried out by the charity Drug-Scope, according to which there are 250,000 gym-goers who are regular consumers of anabolic steroids <sup>18</sup>.

Police authorities in France, Germany and Great Britain have carried out very few and not particularly important confiscations over the past few years, indicating that the connection between traffic in doping substances and crime has been misunderstood or underestimated. On 29 August 2006, the Polish police advised German colleagues that 10 body builders from Berlin and Hanover were importing great quantities of anabolic steroids into Germany <sup>19</sup>.

Criticism of these three countries is born of an awareness of their importance; taken together, their population totals nearly 200 million: a significant portion of the potential doping market. These countries are also well organized and they could effectively contribute to an international anti-doping strategy.



In the meantime, Germany, which also exports doping substances, could establish specific measures to regulate the production of national pharmaceutical companies.

#### 11.12 Shadows and light of the Italian situation

The Italian anti-doping law, issued in 2000, gave impulse to investigations conducted by the judicial and police authorities concerning illicit traffic in doping substances. Several hundred investigations have been carried out since then and have led to arrests and the confiscation of significant amounts of doping substances <sup>20</sup>.

Recap of confiscations effected between 2003 and 2005	
2003	1,980,520 doses
2004	2,243,843 doses
2005	2,536,900 doses

A little light has been shed on the traffic in doping substances, but it does not come from the arrests (subjects under arrest are soon set free and allowed to go back to their business), or the confiscations (although they are steadily increasing, they still represent a very low percentage of trafficked substances), but from the information derived from such investigations (mainly through wire tapping) that allows for a better understanding of the characteristics and behaviour of consumers and dealers and the traffic dynamics.

Shadows are: a) the Italian law, like the anti-doping laws in France, Denmark and Spain, is also better adapted to high-level sports than to countering traffic in doping substances; b) several public prosecution offices are sensitive to this problem, but just as many are not; c) lack of police personnel that can be dedicated to these investigations; d) the interest surrounding high-level sports from a lobby that has always opposed this law and is now trying to water down its effects.

#### 11.13 The situation in Scandinavian countries

No Scandinavian country, except Denmark, has a specific anti-doping criminal law but, as in Belgium and Great Britain, criminal investigations can be carried out because several doping substances are listed among substances forbidden by anti-narcotics laws. This can also be an effective legislative solution.

Aside from the legislative solution adopted, in Scandinavian countries, the main limitation also stems from the fact that anti-doping investigations are given very low priority compared to anti-narcotics investigations. In Norway, Finland and Denmark, nearly all judicial and police activities were triggered by customs controls, while in Sweden there have customs controls but also domestic investigations concerning, for instance, the gyms.

Investigation procedures obviously have a crucial effect on the overall result obtained, with confiscations and deterrent measures aimed at traffic in doping substances. These aspects will be discussed in the conclusions.

#### 11.14 The obscure situation in the Netherlands

Between 1994 and 1998, several studies, particularly thorough at the time, already described an increasing diffusion of doping among amateur sport practitioners and regular gym-goers. The phenomenon was just beginning, but its value was estimated at over 100 million dollars, a very impressive figure for such a small country. About a dozen wholesale traffickers were identified, as well as a network of retailers. A study conducted in 1998 by Simon C., Cools C., Prompers J. and Van Cleij R., entitled *"An explanatory study into the trade of performance-enhancing drugs in the Netherlands"*, reported the opinion of investigation authorities and confirmed this country's significant role in the production and export of doping substances <sup>21</sup>.

Incredibly, the strongest effort against doping in the Netherlands is limited to that period. Since 1998, no important confiscations or actions against clandestine plants have been reported, nor have the authorities responded to indications provided by investigations conducted in other countries, in which the Netherlands figured as a producer of doping substances.

#### 11.15 The situation in other Western European countries

Very few anti-doping investigations are carried out in the Republic of Ireland or in Northern Ireland, and little is known about the situation in Iceland, Switzerland, Austria (except the previously mentioned vast operation conducted in Vienna in 2002) or Portugal, although probably not much is done.

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## 12. THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE USA

Previous paragraphs provide data on the situation in the USA; some refer to recent facts that have determined the development of doping, and others refer to trafficking over the Internet, in which the USA plays a very significant role. Others refer to the delicate and serious problem of soldiers and policemen involved in consumption and traffic in doping substances.

A list of the more recent and significant judicial and police action conducted or coordinated for the most part by the US DEA illustrates this country's great effort to combat doping although, even in the USA, doping is considered a lesser priority compared to narcotics.

### 12.1 Trafficking and counterfeit production of peptide hormones

Since 2000, the counterfeit production and illegal marketing of peptide hormones (in particular erythropoietin and growth hormone) has greatly increased on the US doping black market, thus producing significant amounts of money for pharmaceutical companies and organized crime <sup>1</sup>.

On 23 January 2002, the New York Times wrote about the theft of 6,000 phials of Saizen (a GH-based drug) in Phoenix. Investigators said that the group might have intended to sell the drugs to athletes competing in the Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. The substances had a wholesale value of nearly two million dollars and a black-market value of three times that <sup>2</sup>.

On 8 May 2002, the judge sentenced Zakrzeski to five years in jail on each count, to run concurrently, with all but 18 months suspended, and ordered him to serve five years' probation; he was also sentenced to pay a total of 400,000 dollars. From 1 February 1999 to 31 August 2001, Zakrzeski's corporation, at his direction, filed claims with Medicaid and Medicare indicating that Dialysis With Heart had administered over 29,000,000 units of Epogen. Purchasing records from Dialysis With Heart show that, during that same period, the company purchased less than 6,000,000 units of Epogen. More specifically, during the eight-month period from September 2000 to April 2001, Zakrzeski personally initialled billing forms showing that over 8,000,000 units of Epogen had been given to Medicaid patients, while his company had purchased less than 400,000 units during that period. Zakrzeski's known failure to provide Epogen to dialysis patients for whom a doctor had prescribed Epogen as a necessary medication created a substantial risk of death and serious injury to those patients. In a related matter, the investigation of Dialysis With Heart also revealed that Zakrzeski had purchased Epogen on the black market. The attorney announced that Thomas Guy had pleaded guilty to stealing Epogen from Maryland General Hospital and selling it to Zakrzeski. Epogen has a short shelf life if it is not refrigerated and the Epogen that Guy sold to Zakrzeski for use on Dialysis With Heart patients had not been continually refrigerated <sup>3</sup>.

In the same period, the US Food and Drug Administration and the manufacturer, Amgen Inc., became aware that a major wholesale distributor was holding approximately 1,600 cartons of counterfeit Epogen<sup>4</sup>. Two weeks later, on 24 May, Amgen issued a second advisory letter to warn healthcare professionals that two additional counterfeit batches of Epogen had been discovered.

On 25 July 2002, the US Food and Drug Administration communicated that several counterfeit batches of erythropoietin and growth hormone drugs had been discovered<sup>5</sup>.

On 21 July 2003, the Supreme Court of the State of Florida investigated 19 people for a shipment of 11,000 boxes of counterfeit erythropoietin and growth hormone drugs (Epogen and Procrit), which had resulted in a profit of 28,000,000 dollars for the counterfeiters<sup>6</sup>.

In December 2003, several investigations discovered that South Florida criminals had counterfeited Procrit and Epogen, making an illicit profit of approximately 46 million dollars<sup>7</sup>.

On 9 March 2004, Hadi M. Ghandour pleaded guilty to conspiracy to introduce counterfeit human growth hormone. Ghandour owned and operated Genapharm, Inc., a distributor of supplements specifically marketed to athletes to enhance performance. Ghandour also counterfeited the labels for Nutropin AQ, a human growth hormone manufactured by Genentech, Inc., and placed them on phials containing an insulin mixture. Ghandour had been previously convicted of counterfeiting steroids (misdemeanour) in November 1998. Two of Ghandour's co-conspirators pleaded guilty in 2003 and received sentences ranging from probation to three years' incarceration. Ghandour faces up to 14 years in prison and a fine of 1,000,000 dollars<sup>8</sup>.

## 12.2 Trafficking via internet

On 21 April 2005, the previously mentioned Cyber Chase operation was carried out: it focused on traffic in doping and other pharmaceutical substances via the Internet and US traffickers were found to have played an all-important role. The overall value was estimated at 139 million dollars, 35 million of which concerned doping substances. The number of doses marketed can be estimated at 55 million doses<sup>9</sup>.

On 16 July 2005, a physician was arrested. He had been managing a vast network of false prescriptions for growth hormone that would be used for doping. In six months, from November 2004 to April 2005, he had issued 3,879 false prescriptions to buyers living in a restricted area surrounding the small town of Scottsdale. Many of these people were instructed to buy these substances at a drugstore in Phoenix, the same drugstore in which a fake robbery involving thousands of GH phials had taken place in 2002, as described in the paragraph regarding Russian crime<sup>10</sup>.

On 23 August 2005, the US Senate's Finance Commission summoned Alberto Gonzales, General Director of the Justice Department, to a hearing on a series of investigations concerning unjustified and fraudulent prescriptions for Serostim issued in New York State, representing an overall value of 57 million dollars. Many of these prescriptions were issued by a physician named Makhlin, a Russian physician who had arrived in

New York in 1989. He had already been suspended for five years for false GH prescriptions, but had then paid some sort of bail and had been allowed to continue his activity <sup>11</sup>.

On 13 December 2005, during a parliamentary hearing, the US DEA director took stock of the traffic in narcotics and doping substances; he drew attention to the abuse of substances figuring on the list of regulated substances and reported on the results of a study conducted by the National Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, indicating that: "*the abuse of these substances, between 1992 and 2003, was found to be double that of marijuana, five times that of cocaine and 60 times that of heroin*". The study listed a vast range of pharmaceutical substances, only part of which were used for doping. It remains very significant in that it indicated a class of substance abuse that is mentioned much less frequently than the abuse of traditional non-pharmacological substances. The US DEA director also stated that most of these addictive substances were trafficked through the Internet and that, on the date of the hearing, the US DEA was working on 236 investigations into online drugstores that did not have the required authorizations and control systems. He concluded the hearing by stating that the Internet is a universe whose essence is such that it cannot be monitored, regulated or controlled, but that the US DEA had learnt much from experience and had established new investigation procedures through which these groups would be identified, pursued and ultimately dismantled <sup>12</sup>.

On 15 December 2005, the US DEA communicated the results of the Gear Grinder operation, a follow-up of the Cyber Chase operation. The investigation had lasted over two years and was focused on anabolic steroids illegally imported into the USA from Mexico. Albert Saltie-Cohen, considered to be among the three most important world producers of anabolic steroids, was arrested, and eight large plants for the production of anabolic steroids were identified as well as the respective owners and the network of retailers who sold these substances in the USA. A huge amount of anabolic steroids was seized, 82% of which came from the above-mentioned eight plants. The substances had been marketed in various ways, mostly through the Internet, and the sales volume was estimated at 56 billion dollars a year <sup>13</sup>.

On 26 May 2006, Florida South District Court issued an eleven-month sentence to Andrew Schwartz, the web master of two sites that marketed anabolic steroids, growth hormone and other doping substances. Investigators found that the doping substances came from Mexico, China, Spain and other countries <sup>14</sup>.

Until 30 September 2006, the EliteFitness.com website offered Serostim and other growth hormone drugs to treat associated AIDS wasting <sup>15</sup>.

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### 13. THE SCANDAL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL MULTINATIONAL SERONO

On 17 October 2005, before the Boston courts, the Swiss pharmaceutical multinational, Serono, accepted the accusations of fraud and was ordered to pay 704 million dollars for having illegally promoted and marketed, among AIDS sufferers, the growth hormone-based drug Serostim. In particular, together with others, it had put on the market an analysis mechanism to deceive patients, indicating inexistent treatment results obtained thanks to Serostim, and had paid for trips for numerous doctors, each of whom had undertaken to prescribe 30 treatments equivalent to 630,000 dollars. Moreover, Serono was excluded for five years from all US federal health programmes.

In 1996, the Food and Drug Administration, through an accelerated procedure, allowed Serono to put Serostim on the market as an adjuvant in the treatment of AIDS. The usefulness of Serostim and the FDA's decision were contested by numerous scientists and pharmacologists whilst, in Europe, a similar request by Serono was rejected.

In the USA, everything appeared to be going well for Serono, in that the success of the new cocktail of anti-AIDS drugs had also "dragged up" sales of Serostim, despite its ineffectiveness and, in many cases, its harmfulness. This had resulted in huge expenses for the state which, through a public system of insurance for AIDS patients, had reimbursed each patient, for years, for the daily cost of the Serostim treatment, which amounted to almost 700 dollars.

This incident is one of the most significant examples of that distribution channel of drugs and doping substances defined at the outset of this critical/summary review, *promotion, by pharmaceutical companies, of a distorted use of doping products, disguised as treatment*. In fact, apart from a small percentage of AIDS patients who actually used Serostim, the other patients, having been supplied with it, immediately resold it on the doping black market to body builders or athletes from various sports <sup>1</sup>.

The mass introduction of Serostim into the entire US market (all of the states were, in fact, involved in the incident) between 1996 and 2005 also caused the explosion of another huge black market in counterfeit Serostim <sup>2</sup>.

In fact, having ascertained the real destination of the original Serostim, organized crime networks hastened to set up clandestine factories which, having acquired the active principle at a low cost from China or Eastern Europe, introduced huge quantities of counterfeit Serostim into the doping black market for body builders and athletes. The paradox is that, Serono itself, to counteract the "unfair" competition and the drop in sales that the illegal producers were causing in relation to the real Serostim, brought charge after charge before the legal authorities and issued extremely serious reports in which it explained to the patients, and more in general to the market, the risks inherent to counterfeit Serostim compared to the reliability of its own product <sup>3</sup>.

Addressing the judges, Serono complained about the vast drop in sales, which occurred between 2001 and 2002, because of the huge sales of counterfeit Serostim on the black market.

In the face of Serono's charges, evidently nobody considered that these already contained the explanation of the facts: since AIDS patients were reimbursed for the cost of Serostim, they obviously had no reason to buy it, even at a cheaper price, on the black market. However, the drop in sales of the original Serostim could only be explained by the body builders and athletes who, to save money, no longer bought the drug from the AIDS patients, but bought it on the black market instead.

The almost 600 million dollars spent by the US institutions to reimburse the AIDS patients for the cost of Serostim correspond to almost three million doses of growth hormone. If one adds to these the doses sold on the black market, the total amounts to at least five million doses. If one then considers that, during the same period, as can be seen in the previous paragraph, considerable quantities of other drugs comprising growth hormone (also in part original and in part counterfeit) also appeared on the US black market, the black market for this drug used for doping purposes can be estimated at seven million or more doses.

But perhaps the amount is even greater. Perhaps this is a "black hole" of proportions that are still too difficult to calculate entirely. Because the counterfeiting did not end in 2002 after the charges brought by Serono but continued until the present day, as demonstrated in the results of a number of significant investigations. The same Serono affair is by no means over and now the Swiss multinational must face up to further requests for compensation made by a number of American states, for an amount that is likely to greatly exceed the fine issued to Serono in October 2005 <sup>4</sup>.

However, the illegal sale and counterfeiting of GH-based drugs for the purpose of doping, as mentioned previously, has also involved other pharmaceutical multinationals and numerous criminal organizations. Of the almost two billion dollars of GH sales throughout the world, it is calculated that at least 30% (600 million dollars) are for doping purposes and almost a quarter are for the US market. World counterfeiting of GH-based drugs presumably exceeds a billion dollars. In confirmation of the previous calculation, one can estimate that almost 400 million dollars' worth of GH-based drugs, original or counterfeit, end up on the US doping black market, which amounts to several million phials <sup>5</sup>.

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#### 14. THE DISTURBING INCIDENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

In all police operations carried out in the world against the trafficking of doping substances and about which news is broadcast, South Africa is never mentioned. Also, there is little news concerning the domestic situation of this country when it comes to the problem of doping.

Doping substances and drugs are not even noted in the various national reports on crime, except one: the 2004-2005 SAPS (South African Police Service) report, which summarizes the seizures of diverse substances, among which it refers to a total of 11,007 kilograms of anabolic steroids! That this was an impromptu seizure is demonstrated by the fact that there are no similar acknowledgements in the other years. Moreover, the 2005-2006 report does not even refer to anabolic steroids or other doping substances.

Nor does the report contain any trace of the means by which such a significant quantity was seized; therefore, it is not known whether this was a seizure operated within the country (unlikely) or whether, on the other hand, the doping substances were intercepted during a customs control. After all, in South Africa, the customs structure is particularly strong, with its 53 land stations, 10 airport stations and nine maritime stations.

It remains to be said that the enormous quantity of anabolic steroids seized is equal to approximately 220 million doses, enough to meet the monthly requirements of almost 2.5 million people or, alternatively, the requirements for an entire year of some 200,000 to 250,000 consumers. There is no doubt that this would be one of the classic legal news items to which greater attention should be paid, with international investigation work that would concern Interpol. However, it is most likely that no international interested body was aware of the seizure, which was as huge as it was strange. It is also likely that the South African authorities limited themselves to reporting it in their end-of-year statistics, without communicating it to anybody.

The only two possible hypotheses are: a) that the goods were only transported through South Africa but were destined for other countries; b) that, instead, the goods were destined for domestic consumption. There are no elements to confirm one or the other of the two possibilities. Nor is it more than a suggestion that South Africa is, notoriously, the country to which elite level athletes from numerous countries and numerous sports go to spend a significant part of their preparation periods, to the extent that the French central body for the prevention of corruption, in its 2003 report sent to the minister for justice, in which an entire chapter was dedicated to crimes committed in sport, wrote that: *"The role of major crime in this type of trafficking, similar to that of drugs, is evident...the distribution is no longer limited to certain countries, but has become globalized...Athletes have, little by little, got into the habit of going on group training camps, outside the competition periods, which enable them to exchange "advice" or conduct "live" tests with new products. These training camps may take place abroad (for example, in South Africa, Colombia, etc.) or even in Europe, in countries in which the use of doping products is not considered an offence. We realize, therefore, through*

*these simple examples, how the “circuit” has become global and how it has become possible, thanks to simple “black boxes”, to obtain all sorts of illegal substances”<sup>1</sup>.*

The document then states how slush funds, in the management of a sporting body, have various purposes, including that of acquiring doping substances and drugs at less risk. But this is not the place to go into greater detail regarding this aspect linked to high-level sport management. In this case, reference to the document has been used to indicate a possible explanation of the huge quantity of anabolic steroids seized by the South African police. Obviously, when consulting it, the following question is inevitable: but have the institutions – be they sporting or legal – involved in the fight against doping read it?

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## 15. AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN ANIMALS AND PEOPLE: AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY HORMONES

Almost all veterinary drugs are derived from the pharmacopoeia for humans. The difference, however, is essentially the degree of purity and refinement, which is sufficient in veterinary drugs but of an even higher standard in drugs for humans. In particular, the veterinary drugs referred to in this paragraph are anabolic steroids, which are administered to racehorses by a myriad of unscrupulous people to make the horses stronger, faster and more resistant. They are targeted drugs that have little in common with the veterinary anabolic steroids that are used in animals in order to increase muscle mass and noticeably increase weight. On the contrary, the anabolic steroids administered to racehorses minimize the “weight gain” factor whilst emphasising the “strengthening” factor. These have been studied in humans; that is, in athletes. For this simple reason, they have such a degree of effectiveness that they can also be used in humans. It would be very difficult for high-level athletes or sports practising bodies with a minimum of information and financial resources to take them, but it would be easy for gym-goers or amateur sports enthusiasts of a lower cultural level or for whom economising is important.

These are the reasons, set forth here as simply as possible, for which veterinary anabolic steroids are attractive to a number of people and have gained a share of the doping market that perhaps does not exceed 20% of the total, but which, in absolute terms, amounts to several million consumers throughout the world.

In Australia, an important producer and exporter of veterinary anabolic steroids, there has been a closed debate on the lawfulness and ethics of the production of what plainly exceeds the real and proper needs of national veterinaries and countries that purchase these Australian drugs. In other words, many experts have accused the Australian pharmaceutical companies that produce and export these kinds of anabolic steroids and the government that authorizes such exportation of unscrupulously promoting their own interests without taking responsibility for the harm caused to others.

A few weeks prior to the Olympic Games in Sydney, on 8 July 2000, a renowned Australian journalist, Mark Forbes, broke the wall of silence with an informed article (the winner of the national Best Online Report journalism award) denouncing the uncontrolled, unscrupulous Australian exportation of veterinary anabolic steroids, largely destined for the international black market <sup>1</sup>.

Some days later, on AM, the national radio station, at 8 a.m. on 14 July, an eloquent debate on the same issue took place among an Australian journalist, Adrienne Lowth, the Minister for Health, John Day, and the Vice-President of the Australian Veterinary Association, Garth McGilvray. The salient points of the radio debate are transcribed as follows:



Lowth: *"According to the Australian Veterinary Association, it's well known that a large proportion of the steroids sold on the international black market are manufactured in Australia. In fact, in a report commissioned by state government ministers last year, Australia was described as the veterinary anabolic steroid capital of the world. It also found there was an increasing involvement of organized crime in the illicit trade".*

Day: *"The police ministers' meeting yesterday resolved to get the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence to gather a lot more information...so that we can actually have a better idea of the extent of illicit usage of these sorts of drugs in the community".*

McGilvray: *"Very disappointed. We were expecting some action at this stage. Australia's products...are going to countries where the drugs are not needed."*<sup>2</sup>

Six years have passed since that radio debate but, even today, on a number of websites specialising in the sale of doping substances and drugs, such a wide range of Australian veterinary anabolic steroids is available that any attempt by the Australian authorities to put into perspective the extent and gravity of the uncontrolled exportation against which, in short, they have done nothing, would catch them out. These websites also illustrate that, behind all the talk focusing on Australian veterinary anabolic steroids, these same drugs are also widely produced and exported in New Zealand<sup>3</sup>.

In a hearing in February 2002, the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations received a text from the *International Trademark Association* on international counterfeiting, denouncing the fact that Australian veterinary anabolic steroids were again being manufactured in Australia to be exported as human drugs<sup>4</sup>.

The Australian authorities have maintained their silence, as demonstrated in the 2005 report by the Australian Institute of Criminology, which glossed over the problem of Australian exports of veterinary anabolic steroids to the illegal market<sup>5</sup>.

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## 16. THE MAIN DOPING ROUTES

The term “route” means, roughly and therefore simply speaking, the path of doping substances and drugs from the site of production to the site of consumption. In reality, as trafficking is also being analysed here in detail, a number of countries are production sites and an even greater number are destinations and sites of consumption. The terms “destination” and “consumption” do not mean, however, the same thing: it is not a given that a country that is the destination of the base substances necessary for the clandestine production of doping substances will then consume the majority or all of these. One may recall the example of Operation Cyber Chase in 2005, in which the USA was the destination of base substances, which were then manufactured and sold via Internet in part to US consumers but to a greater extent to buyers from other countries. Also, it has often been noted that even sites of production can be destinations and sites of consumption for doping substances and drugs that are not available on the domestic market.

The progressive increase of Internet sales has notably diversified the forms of movement of doping substances and drugs from production countries to consumption countries. Three forms of trafficking can therefore be outlined, characterized by the type of movement of products and the degree of distinction of the roles (distinct or confused) among the producer of the base substances or drugs, the person who assembles them, the eventual manufacturer, and the eventual online “pharmacy” manager.

- Form I, the traditional movement of drugs: significant quantities (quintals or tons) of recently produced drugs are loaded onto a ship or a lorry (less frequently on a cargo plane) to be taken to two or three intermediate destinations, where part of the shipment is consumed, whilst the other part continues, in vehicles commensurate with the amount transported, to the other, bordering, consumer countries. This form is used less frequently than it was five years ago, and is a good representation of illegal trafficking destined for gyms, where many clients/users, rather than ordering drugs over the Internet, prefer to buy them from their instructors or managers, in whom they have placed their “trust”.
- Form II, traditional movement in the first phase and via post in the second phase: significant quantities (quintals or tons) of recently produced base substances are transported by the same means as previously, to the assembly country from which, combined with other base substances coming from other producing countries or from the same assembly country, they are sent to the homes of the Internet purchasers in small postal packages. In the case of Cyber Chase, the scheme was more complicated as, from the assembly and partial production country (India), the substances were then sent to the country (USA), where they were manufactured as drugs to be sent to the online purchasers. This form is constantly on the increase and also corresponds to the case of virtual

“pharmacies”, which assemble from numerous countries the drugs to be sold but, more often, manage from a distance the drugs that are stored in safe places in other countries.

- Form III, one single movement by post: doping substances (in this case not the base substances) are produced in a specific country, from which they are sent to online purchasers in postal packages. This form, which is extremely simple from an organizational point of view, is also on the increase.

The extreme dispersion of the production centres complicates the analysis of trafficking: although the majority of doping products that invade the world are produced in seven to eight countries, these types of pharmaceutical industries, perhaps smaller in size, are located in several tens of countries.

It has been seen that there are countries that are almost exclusively producers but with very few (in comparison to the total produced) consumers; this is the case, for example, for Mexico, Thailand, Egypt, India and Pakistan.

There are countries that are strong producers and exporters but which, for the considerable number of inhabitants and their high purchasing power, consume a fair percentage of what they produce and obtain the drugs that they do not produce from abroad. Spain (which is changing) and Greece are cases in point.

Finally, there are countries that are predominantly consumer countries but are able to produce and export drugs of better quality and higher cost: this is the case for Germany, the Netherlands, England and the USA.

These are only examples, as a complete classification would require a more in-depth study and could be carried out only by the international police institutions concerned. However, they are sufficient to illustrate how describing the phenomenon of the illegal trafficking of drugs in the form of “routes” could pose problems. It is necessary to bear in mind that this outline simply provides an initial instrument to understanding the phenomenon of trafficking since, dependent upon an imminent and desirable comparison strategy, it helps to distinguish between principal and secondary sources of doping and between the different specializations of the illegal market: simpler, mass markets for anabolic steroids, more sophisticated markets for peptide hormones, and markets with a broad spectrum that are capable of producing everything.

For each of the identifiable routes, a summary description of its essential characteristics, referring to the quantitative and qualitative aspects (substances and drugs) is provided.

a) The route that goes from Russia and other former republics of the Soviet Union (above all Ukraine and Lithuania) to all of Western Europe, North America and the Middle East. This is the most important route, real or online, along which at least 20% of doping substances and drugs trafficked throughout the world travel;

b) The route that goes from Thailand (and, to a far lesser extent, from Korea and Vietnam) to Western Europe, the USA and Oceania. This route was at the height of commercial success some years ago, but is

currently experiencing strong competition from China and India. Nevertheless, approximately 6 to 7% of doping substances trafficked throughout the world travel down this route;

c) The route that goes from China to Western Europe and North America. Chinese exports of base substances, thanks to low prices, in reality go wherever there are clandestine factories in the world. Along the Chinese route, almost 10% of the world's doping substances are trafficked, but this percentage is constantly and rapidly increasing.

d) The route that goes from India to the USA and the Middle East. The Indian pharmaceutical industry is in development on the domestic front, and in expansion abroad (for example, in Mexico, Thailand and Russia). The Indian production of doping substances amounts to at least 10% of global production.

e) The route that goes from Greece to Western Europe and the USA. With the growth of Asian production, Greece is losing shares in the illegal doping substance market. It currently exports 3 to 4% of global production.

f) The route that goes from Mexico to the USA, Canada and South America. The production is almost exclusively for the illegal American market, amounting to 4 to 5% of global production.

g) The route that goes from Australia to Eastern Europe and the USA. Australian exports (and, to a far lesser extent, New Zealand exports) essentially concern veterinary anabolic steroids, which are then also destined for human use; for this reason, they are dangerous, even though they represent no more than 1% of the global illegal market of doping substances and drugs.

On the whole, and apart from the particular case of Australian veterinary anabolic steroids, the six countries mentioned above export approximately 55-60% of the entire global illegal market of doping substances. The rest of production is divided among a large number of countries, including: Korea, Pakistan, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain (which, until two years ago, prior to the actions of the Guardia Civil, produced at least 4% of substances trafficked globally), England, Egypt, Brazil, Switzerland, the USA and Argentina.

## 17. HOW MANY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE INVOLVED IN DOPING?

This aspect arouses the most curiosity but, to date, it is impossible to define. How can one calculate the annual production of substances and drugs with possible doping benefits by official factories or, even worse, by clandestine factories about which neither the number nor the sizes are known? But this difficulty in terms of estimates does not refer only to the spread of the consumption of doping substances; in fact, those experts who are most attentive to the drugs problem have understood that it has taken on a complex character and that the use of pharmacological drugs currently exceeds that of drugs of natural origins. It is extremely difficult to estimate the total amount of this mass of doping substances and drugs.

Also, as mentioned earlier in this section, for the public institutions involved, it is essential to define at least the amount of consumption of doping substances and drugs in order to define the counterstrategy because continuing in this way, without reliable reference data, gives strength to the supporters of liberalisation which, whether in the case of drugs or doping substances, would constitute a leap in the dark. The liberalisation of doping in sport would open the door even further to the possibility of illness and death.

First, national and international public institutions should adopt an algorithm that takes into account available data and can then be updated periodically. For example, in the USA, for some years, research has been carried out systematically through questionnaires among populations that are sufficiently numerous and representative of the various states, the two sexes and the various age categories to be able to calculate the percentage of people who are involved in doping <sup>1</sup>.

The results of research through questionnaires on the entire population already allow for a sufficiently precise estimate of the number of people using drugs. Therefore, also for doping, this estimate could constitute the basis of the algorithm, which would then be weighted with other data, if available, such as: a) the size of the seizures, considered in absolute terms and in relation with other parameters; b) the annual production from clandestine factories discovered and closed down, in relation to their potential catchment areas; c) the cases in which it is discovered that the pharmaceutical industries have mass marketed drugs with possible doping benefits, with no justification by correlated treatment requirements.

**a) The estimate of the size of significant seizures, considered in absolute terms and in relation with other parameters, requires the following operative steps:**

1. The collection and classification, by period and geographical area, of all seizures carried out over the past five years, either large (significant in themselves) or attributable to medium or small quantities (significant in terms of their time sequence, geographical location and summation);

2. Using the hypothesis (minimalist) that seizures conducted throughout the world in a specific year, and about which there was news, amount to five tons of anabolic steroids, 0.5 tons of testosterone, 100,000 phials of EPO, 100,000 phials of GH and about nine million doses of other doping substances;

3. Then, calculating the percentage that the above-mentioned amounts of seized substances and drugs represent in relation to the total amount trafficked. Initially, one can assume the percentage of 0.9% for those countries in which the police also control domestic territory and 0.5% for those countries that carry out only customs controls, for which an average index can be hypothesized for all of those countries in which seizures have been conducted, amounting to 0.7%. However, it is evident that national and international police organizations, on the basis of the available data, can estimate and thus assume different percentages for the algorithm; what is important is that, having selected the estimation method, this should always be used over the years and the index should be modified according to the evolution or involution verified through the research statistics. According to the US DEA, for example, out of approximately 65 billion dollars of drugs consumed by the US market, seized drugs amount to 0.477 billion, equivalent to a percentage of 0.7%...<sup>2</sup>.

4. Based on the average percentage estimated at 0.7%, doping substances seized in the different countries would correspond to the following amounts:

- For anabolic steroids:  $5 \text{ tons} \times 100/0.7 =$  approximately 700 tons; corresponding to approximately 14 billion doses, which would cover the "requirements" of almost 15 million people for one year;
- For testosterone:  $0.5 \text{ tons} \times 100/0.7 =$  approximately 70 tons; which correspond to the consumption of approximately 1.5 million people;
- For EPO and GH:  $(100,000 + 100,000) \times 100/0.7 =$  approximately 34 million phials; corresponding to the "requirements" of almost two million people per year (calculating an average of 17 phials/year per person);

5. Also hypothesising that the 1.5 million testosterone users and the million GH users are all already included in the group of 15 million or so anabolic steroid users, that users of EPO alone amount to 500,000, whilst the remaining users are already included in the figure of 15 million anabolic steroid users...

6. ...already with this reductive hypothesis, it would emerge that, in countries in which almost all of the world's seizures have taken place [and this has been made known] (USA, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, New Zealand, Belgium, England, Austria, Ireland, Jordan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, South Africa), out of a total population of almost 790 million inhabitants, it can be estimated that some 15.5 million people are involved in doping, equivalent to 1.9%;

7. As mentioned, this calculation is based on an underestimate of seizures, if one considers that, over the past five years, far more than five tons of anabolic steroids per year have been seized: 11 tons in South Africa alone, and 10 tons in a single operation led by the Guardia Civil;

8. The estimated 15.5 million people who are involved in doping are then divided into the various categories: athletes of various levels, body builders and other gym-goers, people in the military and various types of police officer, bodyguards and various types of private surveillance agent, people involved in show business, and victims of the improper administration of drugs.

**b) The annual production of clandestine pharmaceutical factories discovered and closed down, also seen in relation to the circumstantial catchment area.**

The potential catchment areas of pharmaceutical companies discovered and closed down are calculated either on the basis of the documentation seized that attests to probable lists of clients, or in relation to the circumstantial population; for example, Western Europe in relation to the factories closed down in Spain and England, the USA in relation to the factories closed down in Mexico. The argument differs for the clandestine factory discovered and closed down in Moscow which, ostensibly given the dynamics of the international illegal market, exported beyond the borders of Western Europe.

Considering that:

1. The clandestine factories discovered and closed down in the above-mentioned countries represent a very low percentage of the factories illegally producing doping substances and drugs in the world;

2. The above-mentioned factories operated in close periods, which were therefore attributable to the same market phase and, bearing in mind their annual production capacity consisting of between hundreds of millions of doses and several billion doses...

3. ...it is inevitable to estimate the world doping consumption at a size of some tens of millions of people, which confirms the previous estimate based on the seizures.

**c) The most relevant pharmaceutical incidents relating to the marketing of huge amounts of drugs with possible doping benefits, with no justification by correlated treatment requirements.**

This, which is already a serious phenomenon in itself, is almost always accompanied by the consequent phenomenon of counterfeits of those same drugs that the pharmaceutical companies, somehow silencing the governments and control institutions, have put on the market.



Besides the incidents concerning anabolic steroids sold in huge quantities by the pharmaceutical industries to the poorer countries (for the harsh prejudice that such incidents imply, these would require a different and even more severe evaluation than that used for out-and-out doping), on the US market, which is the most attractive but also the most controlled, there have been numerous cases, besides that of Serono, of high-cost hormones, such as EPO and GH, introduced into the market in huge quantities and through fraudulent methods, to the extent that there are dozens of commercial names that are the subject of investigations and sentences and that have made way for an impressive parallel market of counterfeit drugs. Also of note is the “strange” theft of an incredible number of EPO phials (4.65 million) from Cyprus: how many other similar “thefts” have taken place in the world?

This complex set of facts, assessed from a quantitative point of view and in terms of the types of drugs involved, results in the calculation of a total of some tens of millions of doses and, in the case of peptide hormones, it should be noted that one dose is enough for a doping effect that lasts for some days and represents far more than an anabolic steroid pill.

Many more fundamental considerations on the quantitative evaluation of the doping phenomenon will follow shortly. Taking just one of these, one could estimate how the hypothetical percentage of 1.9% of people involved in doping, calculated out of the entire population of the 20 countries examined, could be divided among the five categories of consumers: athletes, body builders, people in the military and police forces, people in show business, and victims of false treatments promoted by certain pharmaceutical industries. Since the broad US case history is only partly representative of the existing situation in the remaining 19 countries named, this would be strongly averaged out. In terms of a first approximation, for the 20 countries and the other six (Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal and Greece), the data for which are unknown but which have fairly good or excellent economic conditions, on average, on the basis of 100, the internal size of those five categories of consumers could be as follows: athletes 35-37% + body builders and other gym-goers, including bodyguards and bouncers, 38-40% + military and police forces 4-6% + show business 1-2% + false treatments 15-20%. It is evident that such a division would say nothing more about the internal percentage for each category of doping consumers in relation to the total number of people in that same category. The percentage incidence of people involved in show business is also low but, like many sports “champions” who are involved in doping, they have a harmful and very significant influence on young people. Another fact emerging from legal reports is that body builders at gyms, although they are in the minority compared to athletes, represent a far higher percentage of doping consumers compared to athletes.

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## 18. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Already in 1992, in their book entitled *“Bad Medicine: Prescription Drug Industry in the Third World”*, Philip Randolph Lee, Milton Silverman and Mia Lydecker highlighted how, in numerous third world countries, a plethora of small local pharmaceutical industries inherited from the multinationals the dishonest channels of drug sales and the customs of promoting and marketing drugs to people even when they were not necessary<sup>1</sup>.

John Hoberman, a lecturer at the University of Texas in Austin, and an expert in doping, wrote: *“The fact is that pharmaceutical industries abhor bad publicity and there is nothing that stigmatizes a drug like its highly publicized abuse by elite athletes. For example, it was doping scandals in sport that eventually taught the pharmaceutical companies to be cautious about promoting steroids. In 1982, reports of serious side effects prompted Ciba-Geigy to stop production of the anabolic steroid it was marketing under the name of Dianabol, thereby ensuring that the company would not appear to be promoting drug use in sport. In 1988, Searle took its steroid Anavar off the market on account of its “misuse in sport”. And in 1997, Schering executives had the unpleasant experience of reading about their steroid Primobolan 25 in a German magazine article about doping in professional cycling”*<sup>2</sup>.

However, what Professor Hoberman observed regarding the anabolic steroid marketed by Anvar is confirmed by the afore-mentioned decree with which the Pakistani minister for health withdrew from the market, in September 1988, many anabolic steroids, including Anavar, produced by Searle Pakistan Karachi. But Primobolan, manufactured by Schering, continues to be produced, although the quantities are unknown, in Belgium, France, Norway, Austria, Australia, Germany, Mexico, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, the Netherlands, Africa, Turkey, and who knows in how many other countries. Anybody can verify that it is sold via the Internet by many online pharmacies, although it is unknown whether it is the original version or the counterfeit version. As for Dianabol, Ciba-Geigy has effectively halted production, but it has been counterfeited and produced, and is currently produced, in Denmark, Sweden, Japan, Turkey, Greece, Romania, Thailand, Bulgaria, Russia, Mexico and Colombia. Many of these Dianabol counterfeits have invaded the black market worldwide<sup>3</sup>.

For two decades now, many pharmaceutical industries have behaved similarly to industries in other sectors: on an annual basis, they systematically increase production and, consequently, strengthen the marketing and distribution system. But it is one thing to convince people of the need to change their cars every year when they could have them for five years, and another, and far more serious matter, to operate so that people needlessly take pharmaceutical treatments that then cause their pathologies. It is also highlighted that the

necessary medical expenditure to try to cure pathologies caused by drugs and doping is higher than the entire illegal business of these drugs and substances of abuse. In the USA, for example, it was calculated that an annual medical expenditure of almost 100 billion dollars was needed to treat the problems of drug addicts, whose drug expenditure amounts to 65 billion dollars <sup>4</sup>.

This type of pharmaceutical industry poses a threat to society and for some time now it has been the ideal partner of organized crime. What better agreement could, indeed, be imagined than that established between this kind of pharmaceutical industry and organized crime? The former has the need, once an excess of drugs has been produced (in relation to the real treatment needs of sick people), to sell them, keeping itself as far from suspicion as possible, whilst organized crime networks can obtain unofficial drugs that can be managed with great ease and to great financial advantage.

The US DEA, in the now historical Prague International Conference, besides the police, the governments and the IOC, also addressed, to no avail, the World Health Organisation, inviting it to carry out monitoring to ensure that the pharmaceutical production of drugs with possible doping benefits would not be deviated for improper use.

## 18.1 Bibliography

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