

Peter Kruize: The Dutch prison policy. [Danish: Den hollandske fængselspolitik]. Pp. 188-194.

Dutch prison rates are on the rise. According to some leading Nordic criminologists because of a more punitive and less tolerant climate in the Netherlands. In this article a closer description of the situation in the Netherlands is given. Sure, the number of prisoners per 100.000 inhabitants is rising dramatically, but the reason can not only be found in changing attitudes.

The reason for more prisoners per 100.000 inhabitants is not caused by more convictions, but by the period a person is incarcerated. The average amount of time a person spends in prison has more than doubled over the period 1975-1991. The reason for longer prison sentences is the abolishment of prison sentences for minor offences and harsher punishment for serious crimes (robbery, burglary, narcotics, rape and murder).

For possible explanations for the changes in Holland are given. Firstly the policy on narcotics. The Dutch policy may be labelled as double moral. Trade is forbidden, while use is condoned. The drug policy has brought about organized crime and unorthodox investigation methods. It is not the drugs themselves undermining the system, but the money earned in that kind of business. A second possible explanation may be found in the attitude of the Dutch population. Under influence of the mass media, belief in rehabilitation and a lenient penal climate has decreased. Less social cohesion, because of the disappearance of the "pillar-society", may be mentioned as a third explanation. Finally the transition of the Dutch society into a multi-ethnic one is mentioned. Immigrants are overrepresented in prison. Immigrants are not challenged to support and develop themselves, but their talents are wasted in a bureaucratic web of aid.

The Dutch prison policy may be characterized as a two-track one. At the one hand it tries to replace prison by other kinds of punishment (fines, mediation), while on the other hand prison sentences for serious crime become harsher.

Petter Asp: Positive General Prevention. [Swedish: Positiv generalprevention]. Pp. 195-203.

The article is a report of a symposium on Positive General Prevention that was held in Uppsala in October 1996. Several most distinguished criminal law scholars from Germany, UK and the Nordic countries participated. The concept of Positive General Prevention was discussed from different perspectives: inter alia (1) as an empirical hypothesis, (2) as ground for a general justification of punishment, and (3) as a tool for solving concrete problems within criminal law.

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