

Dialogue



Marijuana a crime? Not in the eighties

By Marco Procaccini
Copy Editor

Marijuana is again at the center of controversy in Oregon State politics. The question is whether to decriminalize it.

Marijuana, or Cannabis (also called pot, grass, weed, jake, etc.) is presently illegal. Anyone caught with possession is subject to fines, imprisonment, reprimands and other forms of wonderful punishment.

The drive to legalize the drug has been resisted by various conservative lobbyist groups.

These groups argue that keeping the drug illegal will lower the number of users. I guess they haven't heard the local statistics which state that as many as 40 percent of Oregonian adults use the drug either regularly or occasionally.

Another argument conservatives put up is the classic about how marijuana use supposedly leads to use of heavier drugs. Research has shown this to be untrue. In fact, studies done at the University of British Columbia show that

marijuana is less addictive than chemical or hallucinogenic drugs, as well as heroin, cocaine and alcohol. And it does not lead to use of hard inebriates.

Marijuana is a drug, like alcohol. Does drinking beer automatically lead to Southern Comfort or some form of moonshine? Of course not.

As far as the issue of health is concerned, the National Academy of Sciences states there is no significant health risk resulting from regular marijuana use.

In fact, studies made by several Canadian research groups shows that regular marijuana use is far less damaging than that of cigarettes. Furthermore, the drug has been known to be beneficial in relieving nausea frequently encountered by chemotherapy patients. So much for the so-called health hazard.

There is no need to fear the decriminalization or legalization of marijuana. During the prohibition years, there was a great deal of crime and black market activity sur-

rounding the use of alcohol. When the prohibition was lifted, much of that subsided. The same will occur if and when the marijuana prohibition is removed.

Yet there is still one major reservation about removing marijuana use from the criminal code. That is, the mass-production and sales promotions of the drug and the effects they could have on

minors. In fact there are ways to avoid these conditions.

Oregon Marijuana Initiative (OMI) is lobbying for limited production and distribution of the drug. Marijuana could be legally grown on local state-run plantations, and sale of the drug could be restricted and taxed. Advertising of the product could then be curtailed.

Marijuana is a modest, safe and natural relaxant. It can be used safely and moderately by decent and mature people. It is sheer stupidity to manifest marijuana use as a crime and to treat users as criminals. No one will be hurt by the legalization of the drug, in fact many will stand to benefit.

Letter to the editor

McTeague candidate of future

To the editor,

It's not hard to see the difference between a "campaign contribution" and a "bribe" is very, very slight. After working two sessions at the Oregon Legislature, I can testify that the special interest political action committees, presently spending thousands of dollars to re-elect their friends, virtually run the show in Salem.

Typically legislators are "treated" to expensive dinners, drinks and "partying" courtesy of the many "friendly" lobbyists.

In sharp contrast, Dave

McTeague is a young, vigorous Oregonian who has shown us that he is not afraid to stand up to the special interest lobbyists. I have seen big-time special interest lobbyists literally shake with fear when Dave McTeague has taken the witness chair to testify for the public interest.

The years of "campaign contributions," dinners, drinks and other gifts tend to change a legislator's view of the world. Finally, their reality is often that the lobbyists and other politicians have become their close friends instead of the people who elected them.

This kind of politics truly

mortgages our future as young Oregonians to the past. If you want to see higher education properly funded, if you want to be able to see a clean environment, if you want a decent job, if you want to own a home in your lifetime, if you want to see an end to sex discrimination—then take it from someone who has been there—you need a change in Salem!

Dave McTeague is the candidate for you if you are concerned about your future and your children's future. Sincerely,

John Silvertooth-Stewart

News

Disputes hinder faculty contract negotiations

By Shelley Ball
Of The Print

Although Clackamas Community College's two-year faculty contracts expired in July of 1983, an agreement between the College's faculty and Board of Education has still not been met. The two sides have been holding meetings since February, 1983.

"Needless to say, we're extremely tired," Life Science Instructor Virginia Weber said of the faculty's attempts to reach an agreement. Weber is one of four faculty members who represent the College's faculty negotiation meetings.

"We've been meeting steadily and have put a lot of time into it (negotiating)," she said. Weber added that the failure to reach an agreement has never gone so late in a school year before.

The inability of the faculty and administration to come to terms on the contract has now led to bringing in a factfinder: A neutral party from the state, whose job is to in-

vestigate both sides of the negotiations and submit a recommendation to the faculty and administration. The factfinder's hearing is scheduled for April 26.

Weber explained there are two basic issues currently being dealt with in the faculty contracts: Language issues, which she said involve the rules that govern the way the faculty works, and economic issues, which involve raises in faculty wages.

Of the two major items that have been discussed in the language category, one involves a procedure called Reduction in Force. Weber said this procedure, which outlines the steps to be taken following the event of laying off staff members, has been revised by the faculty in order to eliminate ambiguous wording. The other item involves streamlining the process of faculty evaluations. Weber said these two language issues have been "pretty well resolved" by the faculty and administration.

The economic issue of the

faculty contracts, or salary raises, has been holding up a negotiation agreement, Weber said. "That is essentially where we're stuck," she said.

Weber explained that the College has a salary schedule composed of 13 different steps. Theoretically, Weber said instructors are hired at different steps. As they advanced one step for each year they are at the College, their wages went up accordingly.

Weber said, however, that this has not been the case. During the last five years there have been few occasions when instructor's salaries were raised. She said there are currently several dozen instructors who have been at the College for five or six years, and in that time have only advanced from a step four, for example, to a step six.

Following the factfinder's hearing and recommendation, Weber said both sides could either agree to accept or reject the recommendation. Should the faculty decide to reject the recommendation, Weber said the faculty then has the right

by law to go on strike.

Dean of Instruction Lyle Reese, who is a member of the administrative side representing the College's Board in the negotiations, said he and other members of the administration are not at liberty to talk about the negotiation proceedings until after the factfinder's report. Don Schafer, who is acting as the administration's professional negotiator, did

say there are "a number of issues" that are currently being negotiated.

"Some are related to money issues, others are not," he said. Although the two sides have run into difficulties in coming to an agreement, Schafer also said "there is always that possibility" that a settlement could be reached before the factfinder's hearing.

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