



ZIG ZAG TRADEMARK

## 'GRASS'ROOTS CAMPAIGN

A group that calls itself the Northwest Hemp Foundation is sponsoring a ballot initiative for the 1996 election to legalize marijuana. Oregonians, says director Chris Iverson of Portland, "will be able to buy cannabis products in state liquor stores in 1997."

The proposal, the Oregon Cannabis Tax Act of 1997 will, according to Iverson, license commercial growers to produce cannabis for sale through the state liquor store system and to pharmacies for use under a doctor's prescription. Individuals will be allowed to cultivate cannabis for personal use without a fee or license. Also, cannabis would be allowed for sale in taverns and bars.

Iverson said that profits would go primarily to education (96%) and to drug abuse programs (4%). "Just as the full extent of the cuts in funding for education from the property tax limitation bill (1990's Ballot Measure 5) phases in, we would provide at least \$500 million annually for education, and probably considerably more."

Although the measure has received a certified ballot title from the Oregon Secretary of State and Attorney General's offices, Iverson said that objections by several groups from the anti-marijuana lobby delayed active gathering of signatures until September. "We need approximately 70,000 signatures of registered Oregon voters by July 1996 to make the ballot," Iverson said.

For further information contact the *Pay for Schools by Regulating Cannabis* committee, P.O. Box 86741, Portland, Oregon 97286, or phone (503) 690-2716.

"Freedom is the issue," Iverson said.

~MPMc

the fabric of society by reinforcing fear, a parent of lies. A fearful society is a dangerous beast capable of turning on anything to alleviate its fear.

We are also denied the benefits that can be derived from the use of narcotics in the medical and mental health associations. George Washington grew marijuana (hemp) presumably from his interest in it as a painkiller. Many of our currently illegal drugs were once used by doctors to treat various illnesses until the government started suppressive legislation. In other countries, such as Switzerland and Canada, our illegal drugs are benefiting medical and mental health practices. It is disgusting to note that the same government that injected infants with radioactive substance also arrests people for giving marijuana to dying AIDS patients. I remember a carpenter saying something about a board in someone's eye.

Other rights it violates include our right to a fair and impartial legal system. By making the courts and police enforce unjust laws the government destroys the law's credibility and effectiveness. Fifty senior judges have refused to try any more drug cases and some have stepped down from the bench as a result. After 29 years on the bench I have concluded that federal drug laws are a disaster. It is time to get the government out of drug enforcement. (Judge Whitman Knapp) If we continue to pursue the prosecution of drug offenses we will quite simply destroy what little good there is left in our legal system and the dream so many have given their life for.

Our freedom of speech is also violated as our government actively generates propaganda to stir public opinion in favor of their war and gives no effort to addressing those individuals and groups with dissenting opinions.

These laws are also a major instigator of the abuse and violence surrounding the use of narcotics. By outlawing them, they are taken out of the hands of responsible persons and often placed into the hands of irresponsible and often dangerous individuals. Narcotics are the cash cow of organized crime and the quickest way to deplete the drug cartels of their immense profit is to legalize drugs. It is for this reason the drug lords bribe politicians and fund campaigns to keep their billion dollar industry alive by maintaining its illegality.

The first extension of injustice I was made aware of concerned marijuana. Marijuana comes from the hemp plant, which to the best of my knowledge is the highest fiber producing plant on the face of the earth. It far exceeds all others in the length of fiber it produces, it is more easily and readily cultivated and does not deplete the soil of its nutrients nearly as much as high fiber cottonwood trees do. Its seeds are also tremendously nutritional. Thus because hemp is illegal to grow in the U.S., people are denied the right to make a living from growing this very useful plant. We are also denied the right to choose a much more environmentally sound source for our paper products. Where the timber industry is facing the end of its potential, hemp has hardly begun to bloom.

The illegality of marijuana has a history full of injustices and fraud perpetrated against the people. The beginning of marijuana legislation came about just as machinery had been

invented to make hemp competable with paper products. Both DuPont and Hearst stood close to lose a fortune. Hearst, who not only printed newspapers and magazines but also made the paper they were printed on, began propagating the belief that marijuana was an evil influence to America's youth. Wool was put over the people's eyes by using the name *marijuana*, which few understood was the hemp so many readily cultivated. When the committee attempting to legislate marijuana came before Congress a question was asked from the floor: "Did anyone consult with the AMA and get their opinion?" Representative Vinson answered for the committee: "Yes we have...and they are in complete agreement." This is false. The American Medical Association was absolutely against legislating marijuana. The law passed, however, and within two years more than 3,000 doctors were arrested. The AMA capitulated and came out in opposition to marijuana. (Of business, for business, and by business.)

The first zealous attacks on marijuana gave it the look of causing extreme violence amongst the youth. Naturally this lie could not hold out long because marijuana's effect upon a person is mildly the opposite. (Alcohol is the drug with a history of a very strong association with violence.) During the communist scare the government flipped the coin of hypocrisy and began screaming exactly the opposite. They propagated the belief that marijuana caused extreme passivity and was being circulated around the United States by communist factions in an effort to undermine our fervent anticommunist diligence. Has anyone had enough of being lied to and manipulated?

Outlawing narcotics also infringes upon a person's religious freedom. It is not the place of the government to enact legislation based upon religious morals. This is strictly prohibited within the Constitution. Many of the laws against narcotics have grown of evangelical movements as did Prohibition. 'Prohibition goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and makes a crime out of things that are not a crime.' (Abraham Lincoln) Many religious traditions also involve the use of hallucinogenic and other drugs. Thus some are cut off from their traditional roots while others are denied the right to seek their spiritual path through alternatives that involve illegal drugs.



URIAH HULSEY

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It is easy to recognize how rampant violence became during Prohibition. Now that alcohol is legal one can buy it in a grocery store instead of in a backstreet alley from a guntoting thug. The violence surrounding narcotics would disappear as quickly if legalized as did the violence around alcohol after Prohibition was repealed. The suspicion that the number of addicts would increase and therefore create more crime to support their habit is false. First of all a large percentage of crime in America is recreational drug use. Free from pursuing millions of harmless occasional drug users (whose only crime is their use of drugs), repeal of repressive drug laws would free government law enforcement agencies and judicial courts to pursue, arrest and bring to trial more murderers, rapists and thieves.

If the U.S. government wishes to resolve both the violence and abuse surrounding narcotics it would first pacify our streets with genuine freedom and alleviate the social conditions which produce both the obsessive consumption of drugs and the lucrative market for them instead of wasting billions of taxpayers' dollars on crimes that are not crimes.

Grounded in my conclusions, then, the question arises as to whether or not I should act against this injustice. It seemed to me inconceivable that I should do nothing about this injustice, but since the injustice extended to others and not necessarily to myself there were doubts. My heart knew only one answer and that was simply, yes, but my mind with all its fears required a little more convincing. The arguments for my involvement dispelled my doubts. After addressing this aspect of my concerns to a friend I came across this quote: 'First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out, because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the communists and I did not speak out, because I was not a communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out, because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.' (Pastor Nienoe) I further believe in the golden rule which compels me to act because I would want others to speak out against injustices to me even if I was too paralyzed with fear to defend myself. Is it also not wrong to remain quiet and inactive towards an injustice? Doesn't this make one an accomplice by our concepts of justice?

I was almost convinced there existed another possibility. Though it is not the government's charge to enforce morality, it is my choice to choose a moral course of action. If drugs are immoral, then perhaps it is a choice of choosing the lesser of two evils; one, allowing the government to suppress rights, and the other, allowing the individual to commit immoral acts. However, it can be no sin to me to allow an individual to commit immoral acts for one's soul is their own charge, but it would be immoral for me to not preserve our inherent right to choose between right and wrong or to dictate for another their moral conscience. *'Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right.'* (Jesus of Nazareth; Luke 12:57)

Having decided then to act the question became what action to take. The most common answers to questions of how to change legislation are to address one's representatives in government, start a voters' petition or write a letter to the editor. It seems pointless to address anything to our government or the news industry. They with all their collective (and collected) intelligence have carried on their tradition of leading the way in suppressing people's rights. They cry of the malicious heart of drug users like the Nazis slandered the Jews. Our government has a new enemy to justify its outrageously high taxes and the enemy is me, many of my friends and thousands of innocent citizens.

I am the enemy of this injustice and have nothing to say to the perpetrators of this maliciousness except that all empowering word Nancy Reagan so popularized, *NO!* No, I will not accept the government's authority in this by addressing it any more than in the act of being raped a woman should lay passively and debate with her attacker on the legitimacy of his forcing himself upon her. I do not recognize a government that suppressed rights as my government. This abuse must be checked and that is the responsibility of the people and their most legitimate representative, the individual. 'Every government degenerates when entrusted to the leaders of the people alone.' (Thomas Jefferson) It is therefore the people I address because I believe in their capacity for self-government though they have not as yet grasped the reins. I cast my vote in this matter with the whole of my influence instead of meaningless pieces of paper. When our liberties have been violated by an institution we employ there should be no tolerance or patience. If we allow transgressions by the government upon our sacred rights we accelerate our return to being subjects and condemn our children to slavery.

Sincerity has always been to me one of the highest values of moral character. Therefore I believe my action must be one that allows the community to see clearly where I stand upon this issue. I further feel it would be cowardly and dishonest of me to participate in the arena of drugs (though admittedly only as a spectator) but not stand with those arrested and condemned to prison. 'Under a just government which imprisons any unjustly the proper place for a just man is also a prison.' (Henry David Thoreau) I feel this also parallels the thoughts and feelings of Gandhi, Tolstoy and Martin Luther King Jr. My final conclusion is to commit an act of civil disobedience that directly shows my cause and beliefs. It is my intention to repeatedly commit acts of civil disobedience until the laws are repealed or more likely I am imprisoned. However, as I believe I am within my rights I shall not give up resisting in ways that cause no injury to others. I shall always apply friction to the growing fascist momentum within our government.

It is not only this one example of injustice I stand against but also the injustice of all consensual crimes and the eternal enemies of freedom - ignorance and fear. I stand against those who seek through propaganda and intimidation to convince the people that they do not have the right to question or resist governmental intrusion into their private lives. This is a lie and full of malice. 'The spirit of resistance to the government is so valuable at times that I wish it always be kept alive: It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all.' (Thomas Jefferson) With the knowledge of injustice comes the responsibility to act upon it and I am.

I do not however believe in the lead sheep theory of social improvement. I follow my own individual path to enlightenment and freedom where one cannot lead another as I believe these goals lie within the self. I am not propagating thoughts, feelings or actions for others. I am simply being sincere about my beliefs and my intentions. I hope that it serves the common good in some manner but it most certainly will serve my conscience.

A revolution of one, but a revolution.

Michael Miller (aka Sasha) is from Seaside. He is the North Oregon Coast coordinator of the Northwest Hemp Foundation.