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ASK A MEXICAN!

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO



Dear Mexican: I am a half-breed, as they say (Mexican father, Anglo mother), and recently I've been reading a lot about the drug violence in Mexico. I've become increasingly disturbed by the way in which we Americans are directly contributing to this war by supplying the demand for drugs while still making it illegal to possess them. My boyfriend is an occasional smoker of the green stuff, and occasionally I partake as well. But, of course, lately it gives me pause. My boyfriend is confident that the stuff he smokes is coming from California, or someplace "local." I come from Texas, so to me Texas and California are pretty much Mexico, if you catch my drift. What are the odds that the "quality" stuff he is smoking is not in some way contributing to the Mexican drug cartels? Hope you can help.

— Worried I'm a Hypocrite

Dear Gabacha: Hard to say, although more likely than not. A 2009 finding by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy estimated more than 60 percent of Mexican drug cartels' \$13.8 billion revenue in 2006 came from marijuana — but the White House is as trustworthy on stats involving drugs as a Mexican is with safekeeping a bottle of Herradura. The RAND Corporation — hardly *Up in Smoke* acolytes — put the figure at somewhere between 15 and 26 percent in a 2010 study. What both sides do acknowledge, however, is that the relaxing of marijuana laws in states such as California has led to a boom in domestic production (read my colleague Nick Schou's awesome feature from earlier this year, "Into the Emerald Triangle," which reads like *Heart of Darkness* via Ken Kesey) that is eating directly into the cartels' profits, leading to more narcos shifting production from Mexico to the U.S. If you're concerned about where your weed comes from, just do what acolytes of farmers markets do: buy local. Make sure your neighborhood pot dealer is free of any nefarious connections. Grow your own, and tell the feds it's Mexican oregano if they ask. Better yet, pressure your local and state government to legalize the ganga — and, while you're at it, can you also press for amnesty as well?

What I would like to know is, why, as Latinos, we never have agencies like MALDEF, which claim to serve the need of Hispanics whose rights have been violated in some way, come up to the plate and actually do heavy talking like Sharpton or Jesse Jackson? Right now, with so much shit being thrown at us Latinos, we need someone we can count on to be our voice in the media. Every talk show I've seen, who discusses Latinos issues? All white — waz up with that? What's your take on the subject?

— Aztlán Broadcasting Company

Dear ABC: Speaking of being doped up ... concentrate, CONCENTRATE! You're talking about two issues here, so *hay que* start with the alphabet organizations, MALDEF (Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund) and NCLR (National Council of La Raza). They do good work on the local level, ensuring equity in school and work, but fail on a national level because they're good liberals instead of the *chingón* radicals Mexis need to truly fight Know Nothings. That said, they and other organizations did release a survey earlier this year showing the brown-out on our nation's Sunday-morning political talk shows: from March to May of this year, only five out of 234 guests on FOX News Sunday, Face the Nation, This Week, and Meet the Press were "Hispanic" — and I'm pretty certain all of them were the Mexican's amigo, Ruben Navarette Jr.! The reason? Obvious: networks still think we're a bunch of banditos. The solution: make your own media, *cabrones*, whether blogs, YouTube channels, or porn.

Ask the Mexican at themexican@askamexican.net, be his fan on Facebook, follow him on Twitter or ask him a video question at youtube.com/askamexicano!

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