

# **Drug War Propaganda**



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**Doug Snead**

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# CONTENTS

## Introduction

### 1. Hated Groups

Drug Users, Marijuana Users, Drug Offenders, Drug Vendors, Meth Cooks, Cartels, Kingpins, Terrorists, Racial Minorities, African-Americans, Hispanics, Counterculture, Bikers, Ravers, The Drug Culture, Hippies 1960s, Junkies, Legalizers, Bad Billionaires and Millionaire Malefactors, Summary, Notes

### 2. Crime, Violence, Insanity

Drug Criminals, Drug Violence, Conflation, Drug-Related, Deadly Drug Use, Cannabis Crime, Marijuana Malady, Toking Threat to Body and Soul, Cannabis Crazies, Pot Problems, Meth Crime/Illness, Methamphetamine Madness, Meth Lab Land Mines, Dance Drug Danger, Dance Drug Crime and Violence, Opioid and Opiate, Crime and Illness, Crime in Colombia, Giving Addicts the Treatment, Sick Criminals, The Sick and the Dead, Criminal Addicts, Drug Court Criminals, Politicians, Prosecutors, and Punishment, Reasons to be Punished, Prosecutors For Prison, Summary, Notes

### 3. Survival of Society

Downfall of Society, Democracy, Security, Community, Nation, World, The Future, Summary, Notes

### 4. Gates of Hell

Marijuana Stepping-Stone, Marijuana Abuse, Drug Abuse, Gateway Drugs, Summary, Notes

### 5. Saving Our Children

Marijuana Corrupting Children, Dance Drugs Corrupting Children, MDMA Killing Our Children, Children Consume Fake MDMA, MDMA -- Child Fiends, MDMA Ratchet Up Adult Jail to Save Children, MDMA Corrupting Our Children, MDMA and Meth

corrupting the Children, Amphetamines Corrupting Children, Meth Lab Children, Parent/Child Meth, Opiates/Opioids Corrupting Children, Unspecified "Drugs" Corrupting Children, Schools and Drug Corruption of Children, Prenatal/Infant Drug Corruption, Parents Abetting/ Ignoring Child Drug Corruption, Lurid Drug Tales: Child Sexual Corruption, Date-Rape Drugs, Legalization Painted as Hurting Children, Summary, Notes

## **6. Battles with Demons**

Drug Fiends/Dope Demons, Scourges and Plagues Upon the Land, Demon Meth, Demon OxyContin, Demon MDMA, Demon Heroin, Cocaine Fiends, Other Dope Fiends, Dope Addicts/Demon Drugs, Epidemic, War, Drug War For the Children, Drug War Should be Escalated, Drug War -- Mythic, Poetic, War Metaphor, Children Victims of Fiends, Mythic Symbols of Good and Evil, Legalization Unleashing Epidemic of Fiends, Summary, Notes

## **7. Crack Sold Like Bubblegum**

Moral, Religious Battle for Good and Evil, Cannabis: Total Access or Total Prohibition, Hemp as Total Legalization, Using "Legalize" to Describe Medical Marijuana, Classic Slippery Slopes, Medical Cannabis to Total MJ Legalization, Cannabis to All Drugs, Supreme Court Saga, Other Medical Marijuana, Non-Medical Marijuana, Summary, Notes

## **8. Target: Dissent**

Dissent and Hated Groups, Hated dissenters pushing drugs, wealthy dissenters vs poor government, Other hated reformers, Claim Drug War Dissenters are Lying, "Cruel Hoax", Government Says Dissenters are Lying, Reformers: Liars, Liars!, Dissenters Should be Silenced, Dissent Causing Children to Take Drugs, Dissenters Jailed, Dissenters Executed, Summary, Notes

# Drug War Propaganda

## Drug War Propaganda:

### Introduction

The rhetoric of the "drug war" pervades the media. News reports, papers, prosecutors, and politicians all assert that America and the world are in the clutches of a horrible drug "epidemic." They assure us drugs are a terrible "scourge," and that drug users are the despicable enemy of all good and decent folk.

This work is a study of contemporary drug prohibition rhetoric: the propaganda of the so-called "war on drugs." This "war on drugs" is actually a misnomer: it is not an attack on (inanimate) drugs per se. Rather, the "war on drugs" is a euphemism for a police and government attack on *people* who disobey government drug dictates. "Government drug propaganda is just that: propaganda veiled as a behavior modification tool," as one observer stated it.<sup>1</sup>

This study uses the term *propaganda* in the sense of *the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person; in the sense of ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause*. (That definition was from the Merriam-Webster dictionary.) While the *propagandist* may be a formal official from a military psychological operations team, the *propagandists* to which we refer are police, prosecutors, columnists, and editorialists who are simply telling what, perhaps, they consider to be the truth.

We will examine and sort out the ways government and press wage a battle of words on citizens who take drugs. The general approaches to vilifying drug users are described in a 1979 study paid for, ironically, by the US government itself. A National Institute on Drug Abuse paper written in 1979 by William L. White (entitled, *Themes in Chemical Prohibition*), described eight general prohibition themes that propagandists use. These eight "themes," or ideas, form the chapters of this book: each chapter is devoted to the examination of a given prohibitionist theme.

Chapter one examines the prohibitionist theme of associating a drug (and the drug's users) with *hated groups* and accepted enemies. Chapter two compares rhetoric that claims the targeted drug causes great harm to people, making them *insane, violent, criminal*, or dead. Chapter three



## Drug War Propaganda

looks at claims that the *survival of society* depends on jailing users of the prohibited drug. Chapter four juxtaposes various prohibitionist claims that drug A is a "*gateway*" to drug B. Chapter five continues, exploring ways prohibitionist propagandists exploit parental fears for their *children*. Chapter six details the rhetoric which paints users as demonic fiends, which paints drug use as "*epidemic*," and which paints government actions to hurt and jail drug users as "*war*." Chapter seven contrasts and compares drug war rhetoric as it repeats the (false) dilemma presenting drug policy options as a stark choice: the *total prohibition* of drugs, as opposed to the *total access* to drugs by everyone. Finally, in chapter eight, we see where prohibitionists, instead of demonstrating the truth of their reasons for jailing drug users, simply *attack* those who would dare question them.

It is my wish that this book will help people to critically examine the claims made by drug war propagandists, and to effectively question drug war authorities in government and media.

### *notes*

1. Janelle Brown, *Saying no to propaganda*, Salon Magazine, March 12, 2002

## Drug War Propaganda

### Hated Groups

*"Detective Stephen Stone, testified during the trial that he believed it was the type of concert that would attract drug trafficking. 'There's certain groups known as Goths that attend these events and they sort of have made a name for themselves to be against the laws of society.'"*<sup>1</sup>

One way prohibitionists vilify drugs and their users is to associate them with groups within society that are hated.<sup>2</sup> Drug warriors link drug users with those who are already hated, hoping that negative attributes established in people's minds concerning the hated subgroup may be transferred to the prohibited drugs, and their users. This is the propaganda technique of *name calling* and the technique of *transfer* in action.<sup>3</sup> As we will see, the propagandist makes these associations work in either direction: the hated group is bad because they consume the drug; or, conversely, the drug is evil because it is taken by a hated group.

The association of particular drugs with hated minority groups and foreign enemies has a long and colorful history in the United States. The association of opium with the Chinese, of cocaine with Blacks, of alcohol with urban Catholic immigrants, of heroin with urban immigrants, of Latinos with marihuana, the claim that a myriad of foreign enemies were using these drugs against the U.S., and the image of drug crazed bohemians such as Ludlow, Baudelaire, and DeQuincy all were integral to the propaganda that generated the prohibitionist policies on each of these drugs.<sup>4</sup>

### Drug Users

The rhetoric of prohibition fosters hate for drug users, simply because they are drug users. For example, one editor shared his dismay that drug users were not sufficiently hated in his community. "One might expect a law-abiding and decent society -- such as is found on the Gold Coast -- to react with outrage at this seeping poison around us, but there are

## Drug War Propaganda

signs of acceptance . . . even approval . . . of so-called recreational drugs," he said, urging greater intolerance for drug users.<sup>5</sup>

One writer spoke of the hated drug users: "drug addicts that have no respect for human life. . . drug addicts that care more for drugs than human life. . . druggies who can watch a murder take place and casually forget about it for months."<sup>6</sup> There is an organization that openly promotes sterilizing drug users.<sup>7</sup> The group's founder has a name she calls the children of drug users. "It's the truth. They don't just have one and two babies; they have litters."<sup>8</sup> Declared one state Senator, "What we are trying to say to those involved with illegal drugs is, this is no place for you to be. Go some place else."<sup>9</sup> One student of drug policy noted that drug users seem to be treated as traitors: "Persons unfamiliar with the history of drug control . . . may fear that the trend means that middle class [drug] users are adopting values of marginal groups. Such users become loathed as traitors to their class, deserving even harsher punishment than is meted out to society's marginals. That is the origin of calls to ban drug users from middle class employment. They must not get away with their insolence."<sup>10</sup>

Drug warriors like William Bennett assure us that "the fight against drug use" (that is to say the fight against drug users) is such an important end goal that all means to this end, especially means involving coercion, must be retained by government.<sup>11</sup> Much of the propaganda directed against drug users seems to have coercion or force as a goal. Because, former drug czar Bennett tells us, of "the dangers of drug use," we must allow the government to "help" using "the criminal justice system" which "can help prevent drug use by people who are fearful of being arrested ... It can also help through coercion."<sup>12</sup>

Joseph Califano Jr., who heads the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University chimes in agreement with Bennett: "coerced treatment works." Why does Califano say this? Because prosecutors tell him so: "Many prosecutors . . . believe treatment entered under fear of going to prison is often more effective than purely voluntary treatment."<sup>13</sup>

The clergy, also, stands ready to assist in fingering the drug user. In a meeting of a coalition of clergy and government drug enforcers, a pastor admitted the coalition agreed clergy would identify drug users to authorities. Decrying exposure of the meeting, a letter from the pastor stated that although it was true "clergy will be asked to help identify"

## Drug War Propaganda

drug users in their congregations and were taught "how to recognize users," this was merely to better care for families.<sup>14</sup> Another pastor explained that the "drug user's health and ability to work decreases rapidly. It is estimated the drug user can give society no more than one to two years work before he becomes a drone."<sup>15</sup> Drug users, prohibition propaganda declares, are a useless, dangerous group.

A neighborhood association block committee official decried the existence of drug users in his area, blaming them for crime. "Drugs are the No. 1 problem in Georgetown today. The drug users are targeting these elderly people's homes and stealing everything they have. There's no reason these folks have to suffer."<sup>16</sup> Reporting on "New Police Powers To Control Drug Users" one paper described the situation. "New powers enabling police to remove drug users from public places came into force," so that "police will be able to deal with drug-affected people. . . by removing them from public areas," possibly to a "health centre for treatment."<sup>17</sup> The types of drugs covered under this law were not specified.

Police enjoy broad powers in their fight against drug users. In one raid on an entire neighborhood, "The police smashed furniture, punched holes in walls, destroyed family photos, ripped down cabinet doors, slashed sofas, shattered mirrors, hammered toilets to porcelain shards, doused clothing with bleach and emptied refrigerators. Some officers left their own graffiti: 'LAPD Rules.' 'Rollin' 30s Die.' Dozens of residents from the apartments and surrounding neighborhood were rounded up. Many were humiliated or beaten, but none was charged with a crime. . . 'They handcuffed me, kicked my feet out from underneath me and then beat me.'"<sup>18</sup> At the police station "officers ordered them to whistle the theme from the 'Andy Griffith Show.'"<sup>19</sup> The neighborhood-wide raid "netted fewer than six ounces of marijuana and less than an ounce of cocaine."<sup>20</sup>

Conflating (that is to say, intentionally confusing) any and all substances from crack to heroin to marijuana into "drugs," and conflating all those who take any drugs, from a shivering crack addict on the street to a Wall Street banker enjoying a marijuana cigarette after work, into "drug users," then allows propagandists to rhetorically attribute the very worst attributes of any drug, to every drug. Thus, "heroin" and "marijuana" are both "bad" because they are illegal; they are all "drugs." A user of marijuana is little different than a heroin

## **Drug War Propaganda**

addict, drug warriors tell us, because they are all "users" and "dopers," are they not? There is no difference between "hard drugs" and "soft drugs," police say.<sup>21</sup> A methamphetamine laboratory and a marijuana plant in the closet are both "drug manufacturing operations." The propaganda of prohibition often drops such petty distinctions in vilifying the hated group.

"Users are losers" went an 80s propaganda slogan; users, simply because they are users, are thus worthy of our hate. Playing upon the "users are losers" theme, one state attorney general put up a series of billboards reading, "Welcome to LOSERVILLE. Population: YOU," featuring a smoking teenager.<sup>22</sup> "The weak minded druggie that's trying to get you to use drugs wants company because misery loves company,"<sup>23</sup> one writer revealed. All users of any drug are portrayed as weak, sick, and in need of treatment. Most of all, users must be "helped" with prison and force. In editorial space a paper gave one government official, he urged greater hate for drug users, requesting that the distinctions be dropped between drug users and sellers: "we must rid ourselves of the notion that a drug user is a more noble character than a drug supplier or pusher. In jail, as in society, they're all first cousins."<sup>24</sup>

Noted one historian: "A dramatic change occurred in the 1980s. For the first time, all drug users came under attack for their drug use alone, not because they were members of some group hated for another reason."<sup>25</sup> The rhetorical and actual warring against drug users intensified in the 1980s, and this proved a boon to both law enforcement agencies and traditional cold-war military interests. "As the perceived threat from communism dwindled, the president pumped up the perceived threat from drug users to justify authoritarian governmental actions that had earlier been justified as a response to the communist threat. . . . Decades of anti-drug propaganda directed against hated groups had created a climate of ignorance and fear, allowing the public to accept the notion that all users of any illicit drug, not just members of particular groups using particular drugs, merited suppression."<sup>26</sup>

### **Marijuana Users**

Users of marijuana come in line for special demonization. This is a classic theme of prohibitionists. As Nixon's 1972 National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse summarized, "Implicit in this view is the assumption that a young person who uses marihuana in spite of the law

## Drug War Propaganda

cannot be expected to assume an individually and socially responsible, adult role. The strength of this fear is drawn largely from the vocal and visible 'counterculture' to which marihuana is often tied. . . . the concerns posed by an alternate youthful life style are extended to the drug itself."<sup>27</sup> In other words, marijuana is frequently a symbol for rebellion against traditional culture (especially in the US and UK). Those who wish to assert traditional culture ("traditional values," "family values," etc.) do so by appearing to 'take a stand' against users of marijuana. "The absence of physical harm from smoking pot has required that all the punitive force be government created. Punishment for marijuana [users] is thus the great frontier of authoritarianism."<sup>28</sup> Prohibitionists concentrate punishment on marijuana users to compensate for the lack of salient negative attributes associated with many marijuana users. Most adults who use marijuana do so responsibly, holding down jobs, building families, just as users of legal drugs (such as tobacco) live normally. Sensitive chemical tests on bodily fluids are necessary to distinguish marijuana users from non-users.

Prohibitionists make up for the lack of obvious negative traits by unleashing a barrage of vilification on the marijuana user, attempting to play up any negative associations that the propagandist can make stick. For example, an editor of a prominent California newspaper described marijuana users as "curled into a paranoid, catatonic ball," "potheads," "lame-o," "the doobied classes," "practitioners of the Politics of Base Urges," "dope activists," "reefer advocates," and "leftover burnouts."<sup>29</sup> To be sure the message that marijuana users are to be hated was not forgotten, the editor repeated the assertion, "marijuana smokers are lame losers."<sup>30</sup> Said one law enforcement bureaucrat, concerning laws that protect medical marijuana patients from arrest, "We don't want a bunch of potheads teaching us about it."<sup>31</sup>

A spate of stories in the British press told of the dangers of marijuana. One reported study "found that 15% of users identified psychotic symptoms or irrational feelings of persecution. Other reports suggested the drug could induce psychosis in people with no history of severe mental illness."<sup>32</sup> "Whether there is permanent cognitive impairment in heavy long-term users is not clear,"<sup>33</sup> one researcher said, concerned about the effects of marijuana on "severe users." Fortunately, a Swedish company claimed marijuana users could be cured in a new "laser-

## Drug War Propaganda

acupuncture treatment for cannabis users . . . all the research indicates this will be a cure for cannabis," and "will remove cannabis from the equation."<sup>34</sup>

Attempting to associate drinking or drunken behavior with users of marijuana is a common tact. The 1930s classic "Reefer Madness" showed people stagger and reel as if drunk, though marijuana does not have that effect on people. Concerning vacationers in a local ski resort, a police department spokesman declared "zero tolerance on alcohol and drugs" for "people who are drinking or smoking up on the mountain."<sup>35</sup> Stressing such associations may be considered shrewd, especially in a nation where a recent Olympic snowboarding medalist admitted publicly that marijuana use was enjoyable and helpful to him.<sup>36</sup> "In the prohibition of marijuana, the absence of personal or social harm from the drug has necessitated the high levels of administratively generated drug hate propaganda. The 'Reefer Madness' era lacks some of the sophistication of modern propaganda but captures many of the elements still deployed."<sup>37</sup>

Concerning the mass vilification of marijuana users, one student of propaganda noted that often a simple, well repeated myth will do. "Partnership ads rely on scare tactics and often highly exaggerated. One example . . . is that of a print ad which showed a preteen in a denim jacket under the headline 'What she's going through isn't a phase, Its an ounce a week'. The ad copy alerts parents to the dangers of pot smoking. How many 10 year olds could afford an ounce a week. . .? It is not the first time the Partnership has been caught out with regard to incorrect information (some would say propaganda). The first advertisement run by the Partnership in 1987 depicted the brain wave of a 14 year old smoking pot. It later revealed that the brain wave depicted was that of a coma patient."<sup>38</sup>

### Drug Offenders

A typical method of describing drug users is to call them "drug offenders" or "drug criminals," phrases calculated to counter the observation that drug use is a victimless crime. By calling drug users "offenders," the implication is that there are indeed identifiable victims against whom a drug user *offends*, just as for a robbery or rape. Such names are crafted to blur the distinction, also, between a user and a seller of drugs. "A letter from the head of the state District Attorneys Association cited 'grave concerns' among prosecutors over potential

## **Drug War Propaganda**

changes in drug offender sentencing guidelines."<sup>39</sup> A newspaper reported "prosecutors contend that the links between the drug trade and violence are strong and that putting away drug criminals makes the streets safer."<sup>40</sup> Blending larceny and drug use, one prosecutor asserted, "Drug offenders steal. They aren't just selling drugs. The offense may be theft, forgery."<sup>41</sup> Another prosecutor defended long prison terms, claiming, "most drug offenders are in prison today not because they possessed a small amount of drugs."<sup>42</sup> A newspaper explained that new laws had been created to "lock up drug offenders."<sup>43</sup> The "drug offender" epithet can be an effective technique for painting as "pushers" those who simply possess or consume a prohibited drug, without (technically) having to make this insinuation as a direct accusation. For example, one paper described the actions of a drug squad as sending "a letter to the attorney of a drug offender requesting a payment of \$63,000. If the offender refused to pay the money, the letter promised that his home would be turned over to the federal government for forfeiture."<sup>44</sup>

A similar conflationary technique is used in the phrase "drug dealers and users," which also attempts to associate the use of drugs with the selling of drugs. "The effort of the 80 police officers from across Porter County was necessary and sent a strong signal to drug dealers and users"<sup>45</sup> an editor declared. A paper warned: "despite those risks, methamphetamine's profitability and highly addictive quality continue to boost its popularity among dealers and users."<sup>46</sup> "[W]e want to make the point that we're not going to tolerate drug use and distribution in our communities,"<sup>47</sup> a police spokesman informed a local paper. In a clever application of this technique, another newspaper created a poll that lumped together "dealers and users" in a single category: "The Bulletin survey revealed people wanted tougher action taken against drug dealers and users."<sup>48</sup> Arguing for harsher punishments, one politician declared: "families and neighborhoods are under siege from drug dealers and users who destroy families and futures."<sup>49</sup>

### **Drug Vendors**

A group frequently targeted for hate is anyone who sells drugs: a so-called "pusher" or "dealer." For the properly socialized citizen, words cannot express his hatred and rage over the existence of "the dealer." "Those that are involved in trafficking in drugs represent the lowest dregs of society," stressed one police drug agent.<sup>50</sup>



## Drug War Propaganda

Those who sell currently illicit drugs are said to be "the pariahs, the dealers and distributors who are dictated by greed and act without conscience. They respect no one, not even their primary victims: the addicts. They live by the sword and would murder anyone who gets in their way."<sup>51</sup> "More than 30 per cent of the city's residents have been approached by drug pushers"<sup>52</sup> one paper breathlessly reported. "The root of the problem is the dealers, you've got to roll them up as a priority,"<sup>53</sup> a politician declared, in arguing for greater numbers of police.

Sellers of drugs are said to be depraved persons that deserve extra punishment. "We can't live with a system that takes out of prosecutors' hands the right to send predatory drug dealers to prison,"<sup>54</sup> cried one prosecutor, defending long prison sentences for possessing relatively small amounts of prohibited drugs. A Louisiana paper, decrying the "revolving door" of prison, suggested that bail be denied for citizens accused of selling drugs. "If drug dealers know they will simply be bonded out on their own recognizance within a few days or perhaps weeks of their arrest, why even think about changing lifestyles?"<sup>55</sup> One editorial asserted this about the hated group: "The street dealers, the drug cooks and the interstate runners selling from the boots of their cars tend not to talk to their young customers about deaths, about scrambled minds, about armed robbery, about family heartbreak or about the agony of withdrawal. They claim to sell excitement, but their retail trade provides only misery."<sup>56</sup>

A journalist warned that dealers expose children to untold risks, "They're also often the homes of young children."<sup>57</sup> A police sergeant warned of dealers' attitude toward the children as justification for raids: "Kids seem to get in the way for drug dealers . . . That was our urgency on this last situation, because there was a child in there."<sup>58</sup> Another article warned of dealers as child-corrupting sexual predators: "The person providing the drugs can say, well if you don't have any money right now, how about a little sexual favour instead? For Jenn it was just a matter of getting in the car once with a drug dealer."<sup>59</sup> One politician suggested a bill "for a 30-day death sentence for anyone selling drugs. . . . People talk about a war on drugs" he complained, arguing that drug sellers were not treated harshly enough. "We don't sentence to death people who poison our kids."<sup>60</sup>

Echoing an earlier theme of blood libel, one police superintendent

## Drug War Propaganda

praised new laws that allow police to take money and property from citizens on accusation alone. "Drug dealers are bloodsuckers who prey on the vulnerability of others, so now we're going to take their blood money off them."<sup>61</sup> The police press-release went on to urge citizens to denounce greater numbers of other (presumably asset-laden) "bloodsuckers" to police. (Compare that with this imagery of another hated group: "a bloodsucker feeding on the misfortunes of other people. They drink the blood of the indigenous peoples of the state; they are destroying industry and agriculture."<sup>62</sup> The people targeted for hate in that 1999 newspaper article are familiar scapegoats, namely, Jewish people.)

The linking of "The Jew" to "the dealer" is a most powerful combination of two hated groups. An early 20th century New York Times article declared of cocaine: "there is little doubt that every Jew Peddler in the South carries the stuff."<sup>63</sup> "Hasidic Jews Used As Drug Mules"<sup>64</sup>, blared one headline. In another incident, a drug seller was found to be a rabbi: "Fried, a 52-year-old man . . . the thin white strings of a tallis hanging past the edge of his gray pinstripe suit."<sup>65</sup> When the rabbi explained that his sales were for medicinal marijuana and not for profit, the judge mocked the rabbi and on record ridiculed the Jewish man, saying that he must have been "a bad businessman"<sup>66</sup> not to have profited from selling marijuana. Yet another headline, this one from a paper in the United Kingdom: "Orthodox Jews Used As Drug Couriers." The article described "an international drug ring that used ultra-Orthodox Jews as couriers . . . exploiting their renowned piety and traditional garb to carry Ecstasy tablets past customs agents."<sup>67</sup> Concerning the arrests, a Seattle paper's headline, "Hasidic Jews Used In Drug Courier Scheme," told of the "an international drug ring that used conservatively dressed Hasidic Jews as couriers . . . in a scheme that relied on the Orthodox Jews' appearance -- black hats, dark suits and side curls -- to deflect suspicion at customs checkpoints, agents said."<sup>68</sup> (Jewish people swept into faith-based treatment programs which "naturally" encourage "embracing Christian teaching," the president of a drug-treatment program noted, would be converted to Christianity; their treatment becoming means whereby Jewish people could be made "completed Jews" by accepting Jesus.<sup>69</sup> The alternative to successfully completing treatment being a lengthy prison term.)

Richard Nixon, 1971: "You know, it's a funny thing, every one of the

## Drug War Propaganda

bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana is Jewish."<sup>70</sup>

As with Nazi rhetoric which vilified Jewish people, so do prohibitionists portray drug dealers as vermin: "hardened drug dealers . . . can be as persistent as cockroaches; they'll infest an area and remain until dealt with. If vigilance isn't maintained, they'll return - sometimes in greater numbers."<sup>71</sup> Drugs rip away "the human fabric of our society," announced one editorial entitled "Exterminating Drug Vermin From The Place We Call Home." The "drug dealers are like cockroaches: Turn on the light, and they just scatter," declared the editor.<sup>72</sup>

Quoting police, a paper declared dealers were mixing heroin into their cocaine supplies. "Heroin is among the most addictive narcotics out there and police are concerned some dealers may be mixing it with cocaine in an effort to hook certain users."<sup>73</sup> A narcotics officer explained that convictions were cumbersome formalities that shouldn't prevent punishment, when the accusation may involve drugs. "But sometimes it's impossible to obtain a conviction in a drug case, said Smith of the KBI. 'I don't see why we would let drug dealers keep their money whether they are convicted or not,'" arguing against changes in the law that would require convictions before punishing the accused.<sup>74</sup> Another article called for a special "round up" of dealers: "Round up the dealers, the manufacturers and the organisers and throw them in jail."<sup>75</sup> "Lee Iacocca had the right idea in his autobiography when he suggested that a second conviction for selling narcotics should be an 'automatic death sentence -- no appeal,'" one writer said, urging summary executions for members of this hated group.<sup>76</sup> "China is executing drug dealers every week,"<sup>77</sup> another newspaper reminded readers.

Given that drug "dealers" are so represented, how could anyone possibly object should politicians in ostensibly democratic nations call for special police surveillance for "dealers," for life? In what was described as "a new weapon in the battle against the dealers," one politician extolled a proposed police surveillance system to be (first) used on "dealers": to "create a register of hard drug dealers -- give courts the power to order that someone coming out of prison who they think will end up dealing again be put on the register. . . the police must be informed of all changes of address, suspicious transactions can be cross-checked, the dealer is on notice," stated Tony Blair.<sup>78</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

Many believe that drug dealers must actually sell drugs to be charged as a dealer. However, under current US law, every user of any illegal drug may be charged as a dealer. This lets prosecutors impose prison and penalties sold as applying to drug dealers, to drug users. "[A] buyer is now presumed to know that the seller is a dealer, and can be charged with conspiracy for all the drugs sold by that dealer, and be subject to the same penalties."<sup>79</sup>

### Meth Cooks

"His left bicep, etched with a tattoo of the Grim Reaper clutching a chemical beaker, quickly marks Ron Kuhn as a methamphetamine maker. Kuhn practiced -- and perfected, he would brag -- the outlaw craft over three years, working from clandestine 'laboratories' in rural Washington County."<sup>80</sup> Much hated are the clandestine methamphetamine laboratory operators. Said to cause ruin to man and a rain of pollution upon the land, the "meth cooker" is greatly despised. Meth cookers are often claimed to use what is termed "the Nazi method" in manufacturing their product. "Nazi Method' For Cooking Up Meth Worries Officials," read one headline. "[D]rug dealers don't know what they're doing when they decide to use anhydrous ammonia to 'cook' methamphetamine. [An official dunks a dollar in ammonia.] Wearing heavy rubber gloves and safety goggles . . . When he carefully fishes out the bill, [it] is about three-eighths of an inch narrower. The waterless, water-seeking ammonia has soaked up most of the moisture in the paper, leaving it brittle. That's what would happen to human flesh."<sup>81</sup>

The ghastly dangers of meth labs are said to justify budget increases for law enforcement. Meth labs are typically described as being potential poison chemical factories that require "space suit" protection and extraordinary containment procedures to "decontaminate" such sites. At the same time, ironically, methamphetamine recipes are said to involve household items that are easily purchased and legitimately found in many homes for various everyday uses. Still, the training and police press-reports emphasize the danger, the deadly potential for disaster of the "meth" lab.

"But if one of the suited men forgot to say 'we've got a nazi lab here,' to his teammates behind him, the agent behind the table quickly reacted. The 'nazi lab' method uses potentially lethal anhydrous ammonia to make meth. 'What is it?' he yelled loud

## Drug War Propaganda

enough for them to hear through the masks and breathing sounds of their tanks. 'Identify!' When one group chose a different route down the stairs from the way they had come up, groping along the walls and fumbling a bit in the smoke, another agent nearby barked. 'Why are you going a different way than you came in?' he said. 'Now you've got to watch for booby traps!' Booby traps, explained special agent Gary Smith, could be intentionally set inside a meth lab to noisily alert the cooks to law enforcement. Or unintentional booby traps might be chemicals in opened containers that eat through plastic suits eight minutes after contact."<sup>82</sup>

A devastating picture is painted of the misery caused by the meth cook's mind-altering product. "While the typical users are in their 30s and often are white and economically disadvantaged, parents would be well-advised to be on the lookout for the signs of methamphetamine abuse by their children. The signs include rotting teeth, lesions on the skin and twitching, flailing and jerking motions for no particular reason and isolation from former friends and activities. Meth is dangerous. It is here already."<sup>83</sup> In appealing for more money for drug agents, a drug agent painted a dire picture of the use of methamphetamines: "It also included a sobering slide show that featured a photograph of Dustin Haaland, a 4-year-old Fresno boy beaten to death by his meth-using father. 'This is the real victim of meth,' said Ron Brooks, a San Jose-based special agent for the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement."<sup>84</sup>

Such a deadly scourge, government authorities and experts tell us, is reason enough to denounce all suspected with meth involvement to the government. "Let's do our jobs as citizens to tip off law enforcement if we see any strange activity, especially in rural areas where most of the meth cooking operations are usually discovered. As a community, we can do our part to wipe out this scourge before it gets worse."<sup>85</sup> "Meth makers and users stay in their own circles, so police haven't had much success in busting meth labs locally. . . . [police hope] by asking people to watch out for the sights and smells of meth production, people will turn on their neighbors."<sup>86</sup>

Such means, experts declare, are unquestionably justified by the end result of ridding the land of such a terrible group. "Addiction, abuse, disease and environmental degradation," are caused by "meth 'cookers,' who brew up the drug in makeshift laboratories from a recipe of easily

## **Drug War Propaganda**

obtained chemicals, leaving behind hideously toxic wastes and broken lives."<sup>87</sup> As always, painting the group as poisoners of children is useful in the vilification process. "The couple busted that particular winter afternoon appeared to have been cooking large quantities of the cheap and highly addicting drug in their storm room and dumping the toxic byproducts under their children's swing set."<sup>88</sup>

Though officials and authorities fight their battles against this hated group, they concede that the war against the despised meth cooks shall be an everlasting war. "Unfortunately, even if we succeed at that, meth addiction will still be a huge community problem," Fretwell said. 'Meth labs will continue to cook meth by other methods.'"<sup>89</sup>

### **Cartels, Kingpins**

Drug "kingpins" are an especially hated subgroup of drug sellers. One editor wrote of kingpins, "It would be naive to believe that arresting narcotics traffickers is the only solution to the nation's drug scourge or, similarly, to think that arresting bank robbers, rapists or muggers will cause those criminal activities to cease. Enforcing drug laws is the necessary 'line in the sand' to protect all citizens against the ravages of violent crime and the human carnage that these 'drug kingpins' are more than willing to exact for cold-blooded, enormous financial gains."<sup>90</sup> Drug "kingpins" are said to run vast "cartels" and are described as the arch-villains of the drug world: they are the most evil of the hated groups. One editorial, describing a "cartel" as a "Murderous Drug Syndicate," told of the malefactors, "this profoundly evil criminal enterprise threatens vital interests on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border," justifying whatever actions may be taken against the "cartels" because, "the scourge of narcotics addiction kills about 52,000 Americans every year. It blights the lives of an estimated 14 million Americans who regularly use illegal drugs."<sup>91</sup>

Cartels are called "'pernicious criminal mafias.' . . . vicious cartels . . . the greatest threat."<sup>92</sup> Cartels are said to "wreak havoc," bringing "corruption and violence on a scale so staggering as to challenge [a] country's rule of law."<sup>93</sup> The "vicious drug cartels" are said to be an integral part of "this murderous plague."<sup>94</sup> One writer declared that "to rid decent society of these vermin is a positive step."<sup>95</sup> Cartels are associated with and held to be responsible for "much of the violence and drug trade" according to another editor.<sup>96</sup> Powerful captains of the underground economy, "cartels have built on long-established

## Drug War Propaganda

distribution routes for other drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, and have reshaped the North American drug trade in the past decade."<sup>97</sup>

"Drug Lords Slaughter Dolphins," shouted the New York Post headline. The article revealed the "illegal-drug trade is claiming innocent new victims: tens of thousands of dolphins." The cute, "playful sea mammals are being slaughtered by Latin American gangs using the fishing industry as cover for smuggling cocaine into the United States," the article asserted.<sup>98</sup> The "drug lords slaughter dolphins" campaign is a fulsome example of the theme of linking drug to hated group. The hated "drug lords" of the "illegal-drug trade" (and by extension, drug users) are now responsible the murder of Flipper's adorable sisters and brothers.

Understandably, the rhetoric goes, with so great a threat to society, "intelligence agencies, heretofore mostly marginal players in the drug wars, must be enlisted against" the "cartel empires."<sup>99</sup> Associating "cartels" with the communist threat of cold-war days, a columnist warned, "These, after all, are the new enemies of security and stability in the Western Hemisphere. In their own way, they are every bit as dangerous to democratic prospects and the rule of law as the guerrilla insurgencies and terrorist movements of the past. They should be dealt with as such."<sup>100</sup>

Noted one student of prohibitionist rhetoric:

The question of whether it is a "cartel" is deceiving; even the grand Mexican "cartels" are not cartels. They are more like Teamsters or middlemen. The price is set by government prohibitionist and enforcement targeting priorities.

Thus, if you referred to "the Potomac Cartel" you would be closer to using the word correctly. So why then did the Houston Chron float that question [calling a guerrilla group a cartel]? For propaganda purposes. Watch the language, the scapegoating language on drug war [writing], or any war.

The press uses words like "druglords" or "kingpins" etc. for stigmatizing reasons.<sup>101</sup>

### Terrorists

The rhetoric of prohibition has long attempted to associate drugs and their users with 'the enemy.' A natural extension of that is to try to link "drugs," drug users and the use of drugs with support of *terrorism*.

## Drug War Propaganda

"America's war on terrorism," puffed one syndicated columnist, "ought to be *linked inextricably* to the war on drugs."<sup>102</sup> (Apparently since the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11, 2001, the government was not linking the two topics often or strenuously enough for the columnist's liking.) "The DEA has always appreciated the nexus between terror and narcotics . . . Colombia's FARC guerrillas from the start have been financed by illegal narcotics. The Taliban, which supported Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, has been financed by the opium trade to Europe," explained the columnist.<sup>103</sup> "While U.S. policymakers still talk at length about state-sponsored terrorism, support now is more likely to come from the poppy seed than a government sanctuary."<sup>104</sup>

Reasoning by equivocation, other politicians and papers take it even farther: since the Taliban was allegedly financed from opium sales -- opium being a "drug," the Taliban being "terrorists" -- then "drugs finance terrorism," prohibitionists asserted. (Petty distinctions between the types of "drugs" and their sources, notwithstanding.) "This is wartime propaganda. It's sort of like going back to World II and World War I," admitted the CEO of an advertising firm contracted by government drug war propagandists.<sup>105</sup>

One writer asserted that the "main source of the terrorists' funds come from the supply of drug money," and this indicated need for "a national campaign to treat the purchase of drugs as a severely unpatriotic act . . . It could start by having movie actors and actresses appear in television ads swearing that they will never again use drugs because it supplies ammunition to the terrorists."<sup>106</sup> No distinction was made between type and source of "drugs." Neither was it explained how a marijuana user smoking marijuana grown in the US or Mexico, for example, could possibly be giving "ammunition to the terrorists."

Drug users are linked to terrorists in the rhetoric of prohibition. The very existence of terrorists is taken to be reason to more harshly treat those involved with drugs. "Our president gave the Taliban a few weeks to comply with his demands. He should do the same to American drug dealers, and then destroy those who persist in this dirty business,"<sup>107</sup> another writer thundered. (Remember that under current US law, "a 'dealer' can be someone who hands a marijuana cigarette to a friend."<sup>108</sup>)

Following the September 2001 attacks, reports outdid one another with rumor of secret drug terror. "Officials believe that shortly after the



## Drug War Propaganda

Saudi exile's operatives bombed two U.S. embassies in August 1998, he began searching for another weapon in his war against the West -- a super-charged drug that bin Laden hoped would worsen addiction and possibly even kill the infidels. He called it the 'Tears of Allah,'" the paper reported excitedly. "He sees it as a way to poison the West," the paper quoted one unnamed U.S. official as claiming.<sup>109</sup>

Details were hazy or nonexistent. Nonetheless, the New York Times repeated the assertions: "American officials received information from the informer and the foreign law enforcement agency that Mr. bin Laden or his network were preparing to become directly involved in the heroin trade by developing a superpotent form of the heroin."<sup>110</sup>

"Ties To Drug trade Feared," fretted another headline, hammering in the link. "Some experts suspect that bin Laden's al Qaeda network -- and other Afghan-based terrorist organizations such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Army of Mohammed and the Army of the Righteous -- may also be directly involved in the drug trade."<sup>111</sup>

While grudgingly admitting that attempts to associate drug users with terrorism was "good propaganda," a Florida paper proclaimed such means were justified:

Critics remain unhappy, even using the inflammatory word "propaganda" to attack the ads. To which the government should proudly plead, "Guilty as charged." Webster's Dictionary defines the word propaganda neutrally as "the spreading of ideas, information or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause or a person."

Propaganda is evil only if the ideas or information are false and designed to hurt the innocent. By contrast, the ads are good propaganda, accurate and designed to hurt the guilty.<sup>112</sup>

(The paper, perhaps wisely, did not mention how a cancer patient growing a marijuana plant in the basement was "guilty" of aiding terrorists.)

Despite its modern dressing, the technique of linking drug use to acts of terror is quite ancient.

"Today's terrorists are no more modern than their 11th century compatriots of Lebanon," revealed a paper in India. "Hasan would capture able-bodied youth, entertain them to lavish dishes enriched with a drug called Hashish." Cannabis-maddened men formed a "formidable

## Drug War Propaganda

gang infamous as the 'Hassassins' or 'Assassins' -- so named after Hashish," who "plundered, massacred and did practically everything the terrorists do today," explained the paper. "What is important to note," continued the article (refusing to leave the establishment of the link to chance), "is the relationship between drugs and terrorism is almost a thousand years old."<sup>113</sup>

For the purpose of comparing drug war rhetoric, what is important to note is how closely The Times of India itself follows the time-honored formula: justify prohibition by linking the drug with terror. (Compare the Times piece with this congressional testimony: "The origin of this drug is very ancient. In the year 1090 A.D., the religious and military order or sect of the Assassins was founded in Persia and the numerous acts of cruelty of this sect were known . . . [They were] called Hashishan, derived from hashish, of the confection of hemp leaves 'marihuana.'"<sup>114</sup> The year was 1937; the speaker was the infamous Harry J. Anslinger, Commissioner of Narcotics.)

When DEA Administrator Asa Hutchinson asserts, "There is a current and a historical connection between terrorism and drug-trafficking groups,"<sup>115</sup> he is merely putting a new face on old rhetoric: an updated version of Anslinger's 1937 marijuana-terror claims.

"If you legalize marijuana," rhetorically huffs Hutchinson, will "the traffickers go out of business?" (As if this had any bearing on the incarceration of marijuana users.) "I don't believe legalization is the answer. Nor do I believe that it would dry up the funding temptation for the terrorist organizations."<sup>116</sup>

The rationale given *now* by government police bureaucracies, bloated from busting marijuana users, is that marijuana must never be "legalized" because the hated "terrorist organizations" would still exist. Marijuana users now support terrorism, insinuate police, prosecutor, and politician.

Hutchinson knows well to associate drug users with "terror" in every soundbite: "We have to understand that by reducing demand for drugs," (pretends Hutchinson), "we will also reduce the financial structure that supports terrorist groups."<sup>117</sup> The linkage is a perfect example of this drug war propaganda theme: the association of drugs with hated groups and foreign enemies.

Noted one student of drug war propaganda: "the war on drugs and the

## Drug War Propaganda

war on terrorism are seen by our national leaders as one and the same. In September, after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) announced the formation of a task force to combat drug trafficking. 'The illegal drug trade is the financial engine that fuels many terrorist organizations around the world, including Osama bin Laden,' Hastert said. Actually, one need only keep up with the news to know that the outlandish profits generated by black-market drugs are used to support terrorist campaigns. Hence, the term 'narco-terrorist.'<sup>118</sup>

"For sheerchutzpah," noted another, "it's hard to beat the new 'public service announcements' blaming drug users for murder and terrorism. Through misdirection and emotional manipulation, the ads seek to shift responsibility for the death and destruction caused by the war on drugs."<sup>119</sup> The general idea is to link "drugs" with a hated subgroup of the society, a foreign enemy: "Unlike past propaganda, the ads do not claim drug users themselves are violent. Rather, they are charged with guilt by association."<sup>120</sup>

Not considering, even, "whether it's worth spending more money on a single-afternoon binge of anti-drug propaganda than it would cost to build a train station for a small city," another paper commented, "The drug bureaucracy appears to believe that no one will take its drug war seriously unless the federal government resorts to propaganda worthy of the Zhdanov-era Soviet Union."<sup>121</sup>

Another writer, commenting on the "\$3.2 million" spent for 60 seconds of Super-Bowl ads, stated "their message is so bizarre you might suspect the [propagandist] of playing a trick on his clients -- inventing a propaganda campaign that works against itself."<sup>122</sup>

This standard drug-war propaganda technique is insidious. "Linking drugs to terrorism serves only one end: to impress upon the public a primitive fear that illegal-drug profits fund terrorism. . . . It does not matter how many people ridicule these ads; the idea will propagate without public consent. . . . It works on an emotional level, not an intellectual one. It galvanizes fear. It frames the debate."<sup>123</sup> And in refuting this "this high-priced campaign, the more the idea gets aired."<sup>124</sup>

"The War on Terror, just like the drug war, is at least as much about affirming the worth and sanctity of mainstream culture as it is about fostering real security," another observer wrote.<sup>125</sup>

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Both drug and terror warriors need a powerful enemy to grease their psyche, but an enemy against which tangible progress can be made. Merging of the two concerns is a natural for both. How convenient it is to provide drug warriors and skeptics a new incentive to renew the drug wars. And the war on terror becomes both more tangible if apprehension of the drug user down the street can now be seen as crippling [the terrorist] Osama.<sup>126</sup>

Others have noticed how the attempted association of drugs with terrorism seems to be aimed at undermining mounting disgust with the policy of jailing medical marijuana users. "These folks aren't politically clueless," noted a Michigan editorial. "They've seen the growing support for medical marijuana. That's why the new spin from Washington -- shown in public service ads -- is that drug users finance terrorists. Funny how they never seemed to mention that before Sept. 11, 2001."<sup>127</sup>

### **Racial Minorities**

In one recent drug sweep, "of the 43 people arrested, 40 are black."<sup>128</sup> In another drug sweep of a maternity ward, "Thirty women were actually arrested - 29 of them were black."<sup>129</sup> Lawyers defending the sweeps asserted "that racial profiling did not occur but that women were randomly selected by their economic status."<sup>130</sup>

Again, as for all other hated groups examined in the context of this propaganda theme, the associations may be useful to the propagandist in both directions: the prohibited drugs may be denigrated (in the eyes of the majority group) with distasteful minority connotations; and in the other direction, the minority group may be (further) tainted in the majority's opinion, by the drug associations.

### **African-Americans**

In the US, prohibition propaganda traditionally associates African-Americans with forbidden drugs. In 1914, one paper asserted, "once the Negro has reached the stage of being a 'dope taker' (dope here referring to cocaine) . . . he is a constant menace to his community until he is eliminated . . . Sexual desires are increased and perverted, peaceful Negroes become quarrelsome, and timid Negroes develop a degree of 'Dutch courage' that is sometimes almost incredible. . In the language of the police officer, 'The cocaine nigger is sure hard to kill' - a fact that

## Drug War Propaganda

has been demonstrated so often that many of these officers in the South have increased the caliber of their guns for the express purpose of 'stopping' the cocaine fiend when he runs amuck."<sup>131</sup> Such blatantly racist "reasons" for prohibiting drugs were completely normal and common fare for media during the first part of the 20th century.

Although not quite so overtly racist, a common theme running through many contemporary press accounts of prohibited chemicals in the US is the strong undercurrent of anti-black and anti-hispanic racism. Even stories that purportedly expose and (implicitly) disavow racist activities on the part of police, nonetheless perversely serve to strengthen all the more the associations between substance and racial minority in the minds of readers. "Nearly 100,000 pages of documents made public Monday show that New Jersey state troopers stopped overwhelmingly disproportionate numbers of minorities in searches for drugs, the state's attorney general says."<sup>132</sup>

Official denials of coverups, or denials that citizens are targeted for harassment using the pretext of "drugs," simply strengthen the race associations painted. "No evidence has been found that New Jersey worked to hide evidence that troopers searched minority motorists based solely on the color of their skin"<sup>133</sup> one prosecutor claimed. "One minority state trooper complained in a confidential memo that he was stopped 40 times by other troopers while driving off-duty."<sup>134</sup> Such reports are easy to find, and there is even a police-style acronym given to the targeting of African-American drivers: D.W.B. (Driving While Black), the practice is so widespread and recognized. Recognized -- except not by police and prosecutors, who, typically have to be court-ordered to reveal their own data admitting the same. "In an April 1999 report, former Attorney General Peter Verniero admitted minorities were targeted."<sup>135</sup>

When their own statistics force government officials to confront the targeting of blacks and other racial minorities, officials deny they're up to anything new -- they've always targeted minorities they say. "According to the new documents, Verniero and his predecessors were aware for more than 10 years that minority drivers on the turnpike were being stopped and searched more than whites."<sup>136</sup> A lawyer representing a government hospital defended racially discriminatory drug tests for pregnant mothers, claiming "It's the carrot-and-stick approach."<sup>137</sup> One study showed that black newborns were more likely to be tested; they

## **Drug War Propaganda**

were also more likely to be taken from their mothers by the government.<sup>138</sup>

This is hardly surprising; the 'law of the land' officially recognizes and allows this type of racial discrimination. "The U.S. Supreme Court has said police can use race as a factor in motor vehicle stops. . . The Justice Department included race in profiles of traffickers said to be using the turnpike as a drug pipeline,"<sup>139</sup> said one writer. Another paper admitted, "Federal drug enforcement information in past years did identify ethnic and racial characteristics of suspects in the drug trade."<sup>140</sup>

Accusing residents of a small Texas town "of selling cocaine to an undercover mole . . . police arrested 43 people, 40 of whom were black -- more than 10 percent of the town's black community."<sup>141</sup> "One editorial excoriated the 'scumbag dealers' and likened them to a 'cancer' deserving a 'major dose of chemotherapy behind bars.' The undercover police officer was later named 'Lawman of the Year' by the Texas Department of Public Safety."<sup>142</sup> The police undercover officer, among other conflicting testimony, "in two separate trials . . . testified to being in different places at the same time."<sup>143</sup> (The fate of those set up in that Texas town is far from unique: "In Texas, armed white guards patrol on horseback while the mostly black and Chicano inmates do field work, singing work songs passed down from the days of slavery."<sup>144</sup> In Alabama: "A federal judge, U. W. Clemon, last month described jail conditions in Morgan County as 'medieval,' with inmates squeezed into quarters so cramped they resembled a 'slave ship.'"<sup>145</sup>)

Again, the questionable ethics, legality and constitutionality of these practices aside: even the media accounts drawing attention to such practices, claiming they are abuses have the ironic but unavoidable effect of playing on the that very theme, the propaganda theme of associating the prohibited drug and the hated subgroup of society.<sup>146</sup>

### **Hispanics**

"U.S. Forest Service officers trying to crack down on marijuana harvesting in Mendocino National Forest were told as a safety tip to interrogate all Hispanics whose vehicles were stopped, even if no pot was found."<sup>147</sup> A common theme in the propaganda of prohibition is to associate the prohibited drug (or the drug targeted for prohibition) with Hispanics, often with Mexicans in particular. Prejudices concerning the hated group (Mexicans, say) harbored by the audience are then transferred to the prohibited drug. Prohibitionist propaganda has long

## Drug War Propaganda

associated drugs, especially marijuana, with Mexicans. In 1935, the New York Times reported, "Marihuana, perhaps now the most insidious of our narcotics, is a direct by-product of unrestricted Mexican immigration. Easily grown, it has been asserted that it has recently been planted between rows in a California penitentiary garden. Mexican peddlers have been caught distributing sample marihuana cigarets to school children. Bills for our quota against Mexico have been blocked mysteriously in every Congress since the 1924 Quota Act. Our nation has more than enough laborers."<sup>148</sup>

Sometimes it seems little has changed in the intervening years. A paper reported that a New Jersey drug squad modified its practices when it was revealed that hotel "clerks were told to identify Hispanic guests."<sup>149</sup> A California paper disclosed the contents of a Forest Service memo, obtained from a federal law enforcement officer: "If a vehicle stop is conducted and no marijuana is located and the vehicle has Hispanics inside at a minimum we would like all individuals FI'd (field interrogated)."<sup>150</sup> One law enforcement profile listed "having a dark complexion"<sup>151</sup> as a distinguishing characteristic of a drug carrier; another such profile gave "having a Hispanic appearance."<sup>152</sup>

It would be possible to write volumes on the drug-scapegoating of African-Americans and Hispanics in the United States. Noted one researcher,

The lack of strategic restraint in infliction of punishment has exacerbated both the nation's race problems and its disparity of wealth. Three-quarters of new admissions to prison are now black or Latino. By 2010 if current trends persist, the absolute majority of all 18 -- 40 year old nonwhite males will be in prison. American prisons are now composed of over half blacks, and only 18 percent whites. Blacks are incarcerated at the rate of 1432 per 100,000 persons compared to whites at 203. Blacks are 12 percent of the nation and 54 percent of the prison population. Blacks constitute 13 percent of illegal drug users yet receive 55 percent of the convictions and serve 75 percent of the prison time. Criminal justice has replaced segregation which itself replaced slavery as the nation's real race policy.<sup>153</sup>

### Counterculture

Propagandists often use "counterculture" imagery, which seems to be

## Drug War Propaganda

useful in stigmatizing certain drugs. This is the picture of "hippies in hemp pants . . . dreadlocked Deadheads . . . wearing roach-clip earrings or puffing a defiant doobie."<sup>154</sup> It is the image evoked by "tie-dyed shirts, trance music, nudie parties on the beach, hookah pipes, Hare Hare Krishna Krishna, transcendentalism, tantric sex, flower power, karma and the heady pleasures of dirt-cheap ganja."<sup>155</sup>

History tells of many countercultures; bohemians, flappers, jazz musicians, beatniks. But for the purposes of contemporary prohibition propaganda, images of the 'dirty hippie,' the 'longhair,' the 'Charles Manson,' the '60s throwback,' the 'Woodstock generation' are potent symbols of rebellion and depravity used by the propagandist. By linking a given drug to 'the excesses of the sixties,' the propagandist may thus attack the drug. Conversely, by linking a given group to a drug already so vilified, hate previously inculcated for a given drug may be thereby transferred to the group. For example, "Family Research Council drug-policy specialist Robert Maginnis writes that 'hemp is clearly identified with the counterculture' . . . and that legalizing it 'sends the wrong message' about marijuana."<sup>156</sup>

"The millions of people who are experimenting with Ecstasy are just the latest example of a drug counterculture"<sup>157</sup> one writer explained, explicitly labeling MDMA users as "counterculture." One writer lamented "potheads" were taking effective political action, because they were calling into question the jobs of local prosecutors. "Then there's the simple danger of allowing stoners to dictate how California is run. Fairfax, a town some residents fancy as a monument to counterculture, provides ample warning that this would be an awful fate."<sup>158</sup> Sometimes it is helpful to show that the good, upstanding and respectable citizens oppose subversive counterculture attempts to change the law: "There's leftover burnouts who pretend they're the heart and soul of the town. They're working hard to climb down the social ladder by being too lazy to succeed at anything and trying to make some kind of religious experience out of it."<sup>159</sup>

Of drug use in general, one psychologist notes, "the deviants are persecuted and punished not only for what they do but also for who they are: defiant members of a 'counter-culture.'"<sup>160</sup> "Many see the drug as fostering a counterculture which conflicts with basic moral precepts as well as with the operating functions of our society. The 'dropping out' or rejection of the established value system is viewed with alarm.



## Drug War Propaganda

Marihuana becomes more than a drug; it becomes a symbol of the rejection of cherished values."<sup>161</sup> As one researcher wrote: "Illegal drugs may be safer from a public health perspective than alcohol and tobacco, but they carry elements of counter-culture, ethnic diversity and deviance."<sup>162</sup>

### Bikers

Motorcycle clubs are often singled out. "It's always been Hells Angels dope coming into the city, said Const. Joe Romualdi, of the Timmins Police drug unit."<sup>163</sup> "With the Hells Angels working to take control of Ontario's drug market, some observers say the province should brace itself for a cheaper, more plentiful supply of illegal drugs,"<sup>164</sup> a reporter warned. Such gangs are said to be ruthless. "The territory-hungry Hells Angels and the never-say-die Outlaws are preparing for battle over the lucrative drug market of Southwestern Ontario."<sup>165</sup> The propagandist must be careful to avoid pointing out that such "turf battles" are disputes over lucrative markets that would not be supplied by such groups, were it not for prohibition. "Police say drug-trade turf wars between the Hells Angels and a rival group, the Rock Machine, are blamed for at least 158 murders, 169 attempted murders and the disappearances of 16 others."<sup>166</sup>

Another paper reported "police officers had infiltrated the Rotorua and Waihi chapters of the Filthy Few Motorcycle Club and gathered valuable information on the gang's business relationships with Auckland's Hells Angels . . . members of the Filthy Few have been arrested in a six-week operation which netted 40 arrests and thousands of dollars worth of class A, B and C drugs."<sup>167</sup> "Canadian Motorcycle Gangs Gun For Control of Illegal Drug Trade"<sup>168</sup>, screamed the Washington Post headline, nicely associating the hated group, drugs, and guns also. The story begins with an ominous tone. "Montreal -- The hit took place at 10 in the morning. Two men dressed in black walked up to a man unloading his car, pumped five bullets into his back and ran away across a parking lot."<sup>169</sup>

The association between the group and drugs is not left to chance. "The gang battle pits the Hells Angels against a group called the Rock Machine for control of drug distribution. In the middle, willing to supply whichever gang is triumphant, are traditional organized-crime groups that import drugs into Canada."<sup>170</sup> Biker "gangs" are especially useful to the prohibitionist propagandist. The theme of the drug-using

## Drug War Propaganda

and drug-dealing hated group is conveniently combined with another common prohibitionist propaganda theme, the theme of associating the drug with violence. "The violence has killed 157 people in Quebec since 1994, police say. Gangs have allegedly intimidated farmers into growing marijuana, taken over small-town drug markets, beaten up bar owners, killed two prison guards and issued death threats against judges, police officers and prosecutors."<sup>171</sup>

A drug often associated with this group is methamphetamine. "The drug trade in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Geraldton is growing as bikie gangs flex their muscles, according to an Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence report. Bikie gang-backed laboratories in the Goldfields are responsible for producing a big portion of Perth's amphetamines. And there has been an increase in the use of crystal methamphetamine, or ice, in Geraldton as bikie activity grows."<sup>172</sup>

### Ravers

"Our children are being lured into a dangerous and deceptive late-night culture of 'techno' music and laser lights at 'Raves'."<sup>173</sup>

Reminiscent of earlier tales of drug-crazed youth sinfully dancing to music their elders detested, the contemporary "Raver" is an important and sustaining element in the diet of modern prohibitionist propaganda. The hated "raver" group is frequently identified with "ecstasy" (MDMA) use: "Six Indicted In Link To Ecstasy Drug Ring . . . The drug is usually associated with dance clubs and raves."<sup>174</sup> "Ecstasy is prevalent at rave clubs. . . Raves are all-night, underground dance parties known for their fast, thumping techno music, smoke, fog, pyrotechnics and pulsating strobe lights."<sup>175</sup> It is the scene of "parties called raves; in bars that attract young adults"<sup>176</sup> "Last of the ancient hippies hold the fort as ecstatic young ravers inherit the beaches."<sup>177</sup> "Ecstasy, a synthetic drug which also goes by the name MDMA, has been around since the flower-power heyday of psychedelia, but its popularity has skyrocketed in recent years among the dance club youth culture. Made popular in 'raves' -- late-night dances featuring driving techno music and swirling lights -- ecstasy use is on the rise, experts agree."<sup>178</sup>

Linking MDMA use to the counterculture, another paper revealed that ecstasy is "the pharmacological darling of the dance scene: at gay clubs, at straight clubs and eventually at all-night techno-driven rave parties, where thousands of young people say they have found PLUR: peace,

## Drug War Propaganda

love, unity and respect, the contemporary equivalent of flower power."<sup>179</sup>

(Compare with an earlier dance and dope craze: "'I'm music-crazy. Where do I get the stuff? In almost any low-class dance hall or night spot in the United States.' . . . Dancing girls and boys pondered about 'reefers' and learned through the whispers of other boys and girls that these cigarettes could make one accomplish the impossible."<sup>180</sup>)

Police have developed a profile, also, for this group. "Police Say Raves Now In Area . . . People who frequent raves also have their own dress code that include baggy clothes and cheap plastic jewelry known as 'candy.' Many ravers, also called 'candy kids,' like to wear and suck on pacifiers. Ecstasy causes the jaw muscles to clench and the pacifiers keep the ravers from grinding their teeth, police said."<sup>181</sup> "1,000 to 2,000 people were in the club . . . all-night dance party . . . disc jockeys on two dance floors playing music in styles labeled happy hardcore, jungle, trance, hard house and nu-nrg. The dancers 'had a bunch of pacifiers in their mouths,' Det. Sgt. Davis said. 'Whether that tells you something, I have no idea.' In October, police laid drug-related charges against 11 people after seizing such drugs as ecstasy, methamphetamines and marijuana [at a rave]. Ecstasy users sometimes suck on oversized baby soothers to help ease jaw clenching and teeth grinding associated with the drug."<sup>182</sup>

Some say that the foreigner is to blame. As always, linking a drug to a threatening "foreign devil" is *on message*.<sup>183</sup> "The origin of raves in Europe brought about the stereotypical definition of a rave as being a drug-saturated event."<sup>184</sup> "Ecstasy From Overseas To Our Streets . . . Awash In Ecstasy; Club Drug From Overseas . . . Increasingly Found In Local Schools It takes two minutes to find a student on [a] high-school campus who knows all about ecstasy. . . . 'Weed and X go well together, like milk and cookies,' said a student . . . the brain-altering, feel-good stimulant known as 'ecstasy,' 'E' or 'X' is no longer confined to nightclubs. . . . It has slithered out of the thumping music, clandestine rave-club scene and into the general population. 'It's not just limited to the club scene or these dance marathons,' said [a prosecutor]."<sup>185</sup> "The Ecstasy trade is apparently not the sole province of the Italian mob. The government says that the Israeli mafia is in on it, too,"<sup>186</sup> revealed another paper.

Ravers' drug usage is said to be "exploding" and is often described as

## Drug War Propaganda

"alarming." The threat from this hated group and their associated drug cannot be underestimated. "Ecstasy Usage Exploded," trumpeted one headline. Police "described Ecstasy as 'an up and coming drug.' 'We are seeing more of it at the resorts and the casinos with the younger crowd going to DJ parties,' the agent said. . . . used at all-night parties, or 'raves,' which pop up in the county about every other month."<sup>187</sup>

The sellers of this deadly drug menace are painted as underhanded. "While 'club drugs' range from established drugs such as LSD or marijuana to designer drugs such as MDMA (ecstasy) or methamphetamine (crystal meth, jib) to even anesthetics such as ketamine (special k) . . . dealers knowingly sold PCP, Ketamine, DXM, MDA, MDE and Methamphetamine combinations as ecstasy."<sup>188</sup> "Ecstasy and its lesser-known traveling companion - 'special k' - are among the so-called designer drugs dominating the teen and young-adult drug culture these days. Both are pricey, and potential killers. . . Use of Ecstasy - a mood-altering amphetamine that typically results in high-energy euphoria - has been prevalent in Connecticut for at least five years and has reached 'epidemic' proportions among suburban teens, college students and patrons of the all-night music and dance festivals known as 'raves.'"<sup>189</sup>

Naturally, drugs associated with this group are said to cause many terrible problems. "Rintoul also tells of the horrors many of the drugs associated with the rave and club scenes can bring, and the explosively dangerous combinations found at a party. 'It's a real dog's breakfast, what's out there,' said Rintoul."<sup>190</sup> "Orlando's rave scene has become public enemy No. 1 for the community's politicians, law enforcement officers and religious leaders. The fans of electronic dance music, usually teen-agers or those in their early 20s, have been blamed for drug overdoses, sex crimes, vandalism and excessive noise in the city. Club drugs, such as Ecstasy, GHB and crystal meth, were responsible for 230 deaths statewide between 1996 and 1999, according to the Florida Office of Drug Control. 'Ladies and gentlemen, our children are being poisoned,' Orange County Sheriff Kevin Beary said in February during a hearing on the rave scene."<sup>191</sup>

Ravers and their organizers are stealthy. Fortunately, officials, authorities, and experts are on to them. "State Moves To Combat Party Drug"<sup>192</sup>, hailed one headline. "Authorities believe ecstasy is popular at all-night parties called raves. Raves' locations often are not announced

## Drug War Propaganda

until a few hours beforehand. Mark Hein, resident-in-charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration in Des Moines, said he suspects the last-minute announcement is a way to sidestep law enforcement."<sup>193</sup> A "County Sheriff's Office, said that while it is not common, officials have found it when stopping and searching vehicles, and are seeing it more often, 'especially among the younger crowd.'"<sup>194</sup>

Authorities and experts are set to fight back against this "epidemic" and deadly scourge. "The RCMP have enlisted the help of a criminology student to find out why drug users at raves are blending illegal substances and creating potentially deadly concoctions . . . the rising popularity of 'poly-drug' use within the rave scene. 'We want to try to figure out why such a high percentage of people are poly-using at raves.'"<sup>195</sup> "The dance parties known as 'raves' are widely considered notorious havens for illegal drugs like ecstasy, and now federal prosecutors are coming after the hosts of such parties. . . . The rave organizers were indicted by a federal grand jury under the federal 'crack house' law, which makes it a crime to make a building available for the use of illegal drugs, in this case drugs like ecstasy and LSD."<sup>196</sup> "City Set To Slam Door On Raves . . . [the police superintendent] says raves, and the drugs that go with them, have no business in this city. 'My position is that we know at raves the drugs are consumed in great quantities...I don't support having raves in this city.'"<sup>197</sup>

This hated group and their drug are on the rise. Again, note the explicitly alarmist tone. "Drug No Longer Tied To Raves . . . The Institute on Drug Abuse recently posted a nationwide bulletin saying the popularity of club drugs is rising at an 'alarming' rate and that 'no club drug is benign.'"<sup>198</sup>

One of this hated group's associated drugs can be used as a Mickey Finn: a knock-out drug (like alcohol) of the type robbers and rapists have used throughout history to stupefy their victims. In the hands of the hated ravers, however, such are "date-rape" drugs! "Date-rape Drug Seized At 'Rave' Party," an Irish newspaper warned. "The E phenomenon has infiltrated every town and village in Ireland."<sup>199</sup>

### The Drug Culture

Sometimes "the drug culture" itself is the hated group; any and all drugs are associated with this group, provided they are illegal drugs, or drugs targeted for prohibition. The "counter culture" epithet is closely related. The "unshaven, shaggy-haired, drug culture, poor excuses for

## Drug War Propaganda

Americans, wearing their tiny round wire-rim glasses, a protester's symbol of the blame-America-first crowd, out in front of the White House burning the American flag,"<sup>200</sup> a politician cried. "Drug-Culture Panel Urges 'Less Hysteria' Over Ecstasy"<sup>201</sup>, a newspaper headline shouted.

"The drug culture is in their faces everyday," one paper cautioned. This "drug culture" was then described for readers -"News bulletins are saturated with stories of overdose deaths, injecting rooms and drug-related crimes. It permeates our court news. Children witness junkies preparing their heroin and shooting up in city streets and in the doorways of houses."<sup>202</sup> Another paper forewarned, "The tragedy is that young people are growing up in a city in which a drug culture is becoming more entrenched."<sup>203</sup>

Ordinary citizens may not be sufficiently knowledgeable about "the drug culture." This is why government prosecutors need to have secret, off-the-record meetings with grand jurors, of which defense attorneys must not be made aware: to make impartial grand jury members more "familiar" with special details of the drug culture, details known only to government prosecutors. "Prosecutors say the secret briefings provide an efficient way of answering questions from grand jurors not familiar with the drug culture. 'It seemed easier to answer some of these general questions in one sitting than have them come out piecemeal over the course of several weeks,' said Mark Huddleston, Jackson County district attorney. 'We see more drug cases than any other type, and that's the reason this was started for drug cases.'"<sup>204</sup>

The rulers of the land tell the good people of the drug culture, how violent and degraded members of the drug culture (drug users) are. US Senator Hatch, concerning his appearance in a movie: "I don't see how they could have made it without violence and still accurately portray the drug culture - and how degrading it is. For adults who really need to know what kids are getting into, it's OK."<sup>205</sup> The people blame their problems on the drug culture. "The sound of sirens has been relentless. There is little doubt that it's a result of the crimes and violence created by the drug culture."<sup>206</sup>

And of course, one salient feature of "the drug culture" is that it deeply corrupts children. One writer praised actions against this hated group's sinister attacks: "Cracking down on the drug scene as a necessary measure to counter the encroaching drug culture of cannabis and other

## Drug War Propaganda

substances in the school yard. The co-operative efforts of police, teachers and parents are fighting the insidious growth of drugs in schools."<sup>207</sup>

### Hippies, 1960s

More than thirty years out of the "turbulent sixties," the counterculture image of the "hippie," the longhair-hippie-freak, remains a favorite hated group for the prohibitionist propagandist to associate with drugs. As always, the smearing may work in either direction: drugs may be tainted with "hippie" connotations, or, drugs with established "hippie" associations may be used to taint other groups.

"The reaction was swift and fierce. Anti-drug groups and police denounced the [hemp] legislation as a step towards legalization of marijuana. The harsh reaction took Lawfer and his colleagues by surprise. They considered themselves loyal soldiers in the War on Drugs. But now they were being equated with a bunch of California hippies."<sup>208</sup> "We're not dealing with traditional hippie farmers anymore."<sup>209</sup> one paper reported of the dangers of marijuana growing. "Outsiders might picture the typical Vermont drug user as an aging hippie smoking pot at an outdoor concert in the rolling hills of a dairy farm,"<sup>210</sup> a Boston newspaper reported of Vermont citizens. Another paper explicitly linked contemporary MDMA users to the 1960s: "a drug counterculture that has existed since the 1960s."<sup>211</sup>

A tried and true technique, playing upon the theme of the hated drugs of the "60s," is to claim that drugs are more potent now than were the drugs decadent hippies used in the 60s. A writer, organizer of a 'concerned parent' group, vehemently defended the jailing of people who use marijuana, attacking one who questioned their imprisonment. Insinuating that anyone asking such a question must be a drug user from the 60s, the writer suggested, "perhaps he is recalling the marijuana of the 1960's and '70's, which for the most part was nothing more than wild hemp, also known as ditch weed. Ditch weed, though low in THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, was strong enough to get a smoker sufficiently high. The marijuana today is extremely potent, can be life threatening if ingested and is a leading cause of drug-related emergency room episodes throughout the nation."<sup>212</sup>

During horseplay, a young man was shoved into a river and drowned. Later, it was determined that the man had used marijuana some time before the accident. One writer blamed this on the hated people of the

## Drug War Propaganda

1960s. "It's apparent we do reap what we've sown. The chemical people of the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's are beginning to see the fruits of their labor."<sup>213</sup> But for the wicked chemical people, "utopia" would be ours. "It's time for the chemical people to take responsibility for their actions. This country operates on the old supply and demand method. If not for the consumer (you) we'd have no drug problem today. I think of all the money that's been wasted on illegal drugs, rehab, and the drug war for the last 40 years and it makes me sick. That money could have went to medical research, hospitals, schools and the poor. How many of the more horrific diseases would have been cured with that money? Instead of living in utopia we continue to be burdened by the druggies and the criminals who sell them their garbage. They extract a price from us all and our country. We've all lost a lot because of the distraction of illegal drugs."<sup>214</sup> We would live in a paradise, prohibitionists assure us, if not for the existence of the despised chemical people, beginning in the 1960s.

### Junkies

The smack addict. Injecting heroin. Nodding off after using the needle, or, perhaps passed out with spike still in arm. A wraith, ever desperate for money for more junk. Shaking. Shivering. Sick. Jonesing for the next fix. These are images of the "junkie." Junkie typically refers to an *opiate* (usually heroin) addict. The pictures painted in the media are brutal. Junkies are portrayed as animals at times, diseased patients at others; vampires that will lie, cheat, steal, and whore to get the next fix. This terrible menace, the rhetoric warns, may befall any family. "Heroin Can Strike Even 'Normal' Families," one forboding headline read. A mother tells of her "junkie" son: "She gets one call a month from her son (it has to be collect) and she's told him she won't pay for more. 'I recently sent a letter to my son, asking him why should I stand behind him this time? What's going to change? 'My son was a junkie when he went into prison and he's going to be a junkie when he gets out.'"<sup>215</sup>

In a familiar name-calling technique, the "dirty junkie" epithet is frequently applied to this group. "'I'm a filthy dirty junkie who could not, until now, call myself a junkie.' Last month Mardi McLean, the endorsed Liberal candidate for Bundamba, wrote a letter which she hoped would change her life. Mardi, 22, is a recovering heroin addict who was tempted by friends to 'try' injecting when she was a 16-year-old student at the exclusive St Margaret's Anglican Grammar School,



## Drug War Propaganda

Ascot. She has overdosed 11 times and wonders how she is still alive. Dozens of her friends have not been so fortunate. Her heart-wrenching letter said in part: 'Mum: For the first time in my life I want to come clean with myself and be honest to me and to you. I'm a filthy dirty junkie who could not, until now, call myself a junkie. I considered myself a person who was trendy and upper-class, better than everyone else and who used heroin. 'But I now know that I'm no better than a hooker in the Valley shoving needles in my arm to kill my soul, spirit, heart and self-esteem. I know I'm not only ruining my life but yours and all the people who care about me.'"<sup>216</sup>

(Compare to an earlier "dirty, filthy" name-calling technique: "I remember that things really started to change when most of my friends began joining the Hitler Youth. At that time they started calling me a 'dirty Jew.'"<sup>217</sup> Or, " And when the kids who used to be friends would taunt you, and there were certain cliché catchphrases that all the kids picked up from the environment, like 'filthy Jew,' 'dirty Jew.'"<sup>218</sup> The technique is classic, but in a new twist, the hated group, in this instance, is made to use the name-calling on itself, or face additional sanctions.)

Scientists (hired by the government to support prohibition) describe the heroin addict's heartbreaking brain changes: "When a junkie stops supplying his brain with heroin, for instance, he becomes hypersensitive to pain, chronically nauseated and subject to uncontrollable tremors. 'This is why addiction is a brain disease,' says NIDA's Leshner. 'It may start with the voluntary act of taking drugs, but once you've got it, you can't just tell the addict 'Stop,' any more than you can tell the smoker 'Don't have emphysema.' Starting may be volitional. Stopping isn't.'"<sup>219</sup>

So we have junkie-demons, the hated group of craven, vampiristic, heroin addicts; suffering and shaking, literally, for their next dose of the deadly poison. A poison that can kill so easily, the media constantly reminds. "PJ's son is a junkie. He has been for almost three years. In 1998, he and two friends from Porter County drove to Chicago; each scored a dime bag of heroin, drove back to Porter County and prepared their fix in the front seat of the pickup. Glenn went first. Before he could get the needle out of his arm, he was out. In a panic, one friend ran and the other drove around for several minutes before calling an ambulance from a pay phone in Kouts. By the time it arrived, Glenn was essentially dead. He survived, but heroin's been a part of his life ever since. PJ said she figures her son got involved with drugs when he

## Drug War Propaganda

was about 14 or 15. It was about that time he got involved with a gang."<sup>220</sup>

Naturally, the hated vampire-junkie's cravings cause crime. "He was busted on a federal charge (he forged some checks to buy drugs), but this isn't his first time behind bars. He's already spent five years in various jails and prisons in Indiana. He's doing life on the installment plan. [He] is a junkie."<sup>221</sup> Be the supply of heroin great or small, the junkie exudes crime, we are told. "Plummeting worldwide heroin production could send drug prices sky-high, and cause local junkies to commit more crime so they can support their costly habit, say Calgary cops."<sup>222</sup> "Heroin prices could shoot up due to reduced production and either put junkies on the road to recovery or force them to commit more crime to feed the habit, Alberta cops predict. A United Nations announcement indicates that opium production in Afghanistan - once the world's largest producer - has been virtually wiped out since the country's ban on poppy cultivation last July. That has cops speculating on what the trickle-down effect will be. 'Any time there's a lowering of supply and there's still a large demand, the price automatically goes up,' said RCMP K-Division Supt. Dennis Massey, adding heroin comes from many areas of the world, not just Afghanistan."<sup>223</sup>

Squalor, degradation, and horrific scenes are associated with this hated group and their drug. "JUNKIES DESECRATE PARKES HOME . . . Junkies have turned the site of the historic home of the father of Australian Federation into a shooting gallery littered with rubbish and syringes. Once part of the home of Sir Henry Parkes, heroin addicts are using the underpass and creek at Canley Vale to shoot up, sleep and sometimes wash in the filthy water."<sup>224</sup> "He was living in a wheelchair in a city park, going through 12 bags of heroin a day, and contemplating suicide."<sup>225</sup>

The "junkie" epithet in itself may be used to stir up opinion against newer drugs. One prosecutor said of the latest drug menace: "It's becoming more and more available, and we are learning that junkies prefer it to cocaine and heroin."<sup>226</sup>

### Legalizers

"If you pick up a High Times magazine you will see . . .the drug legalizers"<sup>227</sup>

Held up as loathsome examples of opposition to prohibition,

## Drug War Propaganda

"legalizers" are those who believe that adults should be able to use drugs, without going to jail for the act of taking the drugs per se. Prohibitionists call these people "legalizers." Legalizers, because they oppose the means used for, and question the very goals of the drug war, are described as wanting to "surrender"<sup>228</sup> or painted as giving up the fight.<sup>229</sup> "Legalizers . . . the same delusional people who are pushing pot are also pushing ecstasy," revealed one writer.<sup>230</sup>

Columnist A M Rosenthal warns of the legalizers, "the legalizers have convinced more and more columnists and editorial writers. They have won state plebiscites that used tricky, concealing language to make more narcotics available for 'medicinal' purposes," because of "their hatred for the drug war, out of whatever cradle trauma."<sup>231</sup> Staunch advocates of prohibition denounce the legalizers. Prohibitionists are "trying to contain a scourge that is costing the nation . . . hundreds of thousands of lost and decimated lives" thus, prohibitionists say, "quit letting legalizer propaganda undermine prevention efforts."<sup>232</sup>

Writing on murders committed by rival drug dealers, as well as a popular movie concerning drug trafficking, one editorial decried those speaking out against drug laws. "The ever more powerful drug legalizers like to say that both the Philadelphia massacre and the movie illustrate the futility of the war on drugs. As always, they are horribly wrong and oblivious to the human devastation surrounding drugs."<sup>233</sup>

Prohibitionists argue that allowing disagreeable talk is dangerous. With such talk, legalizers are said to "hack away at the very foundation of the struggle against drugs"; with their talk they are "destroying the law enforcement that is essential to effective therapy."<sup>234</sup> In the face of the unwelcome ideas of the "legalizers," prohibition activists still see merit in a punitive drug policy. "Yet despite the false claims of drug legalizers, the situation is not hopeless."<sup>235</sup>

Although most drug policy reformers want to repeal prohibition, thus *restoring* traditional freedoms that adult Americans once shared, prohibitionists see in this a fearful world, fraught with drug dangers. "Successful in California and Arizona, drug legalizers, their foundations and financial backers have a carefully crafted strategy. Election by election, they plan to push through more state legalization measures. They always had the will, now they have the money. Unless Americans organize against them, legalizers will quickly make a mockery of the national consensus against drugs through the technique of heavily

## Drug War Propaganda

financed state-by-state creeping legalization. Millions of new addicts await us."<sup>236</sup>

Legalization advocates seek to eliminate jail for the adult use of some drugs (usually marijuana). Despite this, prohibitionists instead paint "legalizers" as "pro-drug."<sup>237</sup> "Legalizers" often are accused of slyly enticing children to use the forbidden fruit of drugs. "Drug legalizers and drug fighters both know the most important instrument America has in persuading children not to use narcotics has been strong social and parental disapproval. Both know that creeping legalization will eliminate those influences against drugs."<sup>238</sup> As one writer put it, "today proponents of legalization actively promote drugs and a drug-using lifestyle to our children via the Internet directly into their classrooms and into their homes."<sup>239</sup>

Some prohibitionists believe that legalizers should be shamed into silence. Legalizers "should be ashamed of themselves. So should those who remain quiet about Americans who use their money to cripple the nation's struggle against drugs."<sup>240</sup> Others argue that legalizers deserve harsh punishment for their anti-jail talk. Their contrary speech indicates government must "especially apply significant, unpleasant consequences" to the "legalizer," say prohibitionists.<sup>241</sup>

### **Bad Billionaires and Millionaire Malefactors**

Of the legalizers, prohibitionists naturally reserve special vehemence for those who help anti-prohibition causes. Billionaire financier George Soros is especially hated by prohibitionists. In 1998, Joseph Califano denounced Soros as "Daddy Warbucks." "When the billionaire philanthropist George Soros contributed \$ 650,000 to the campaigns to make medical marijuana legal in California and Arizona, Califano crowned him 'the Daddy Warbucks of drug legalization.' He accused Soros of manipulating compassion for the terminally ill as part of a scheme to make marijuana, cocaine, and heroin as available as tobacco and beer."<sup>242</sup>

McCAFFREY: . . . we had this bizarre situation where there was a lot of money, millions of dollars, pushing a referendum from out-of-state individuals, and not many of them. I think it was essentially six people who bankrolled the whole thing.

ROSENTHAL: And who were they?

McCAFFREY: It's George Soros. It's a guy named Sperling,

## Drug War Propaganda

there's - Rockefeller was one of them. . .

ROSENTHAL: The other day I wrote something, I mentioned Soros - this guy is really gonna cause us - is causing trouble in this. He does all these things. He is supporting the pro-drug foundations.

McCAFFREY: I agree absolutely.

ROSENTHAL: All over the country.

McCAFFREY: He's at the heart and soul of a lot of this. It's alleged he spent 15 million bucks plus-

ROSENTHAL: The heart and soul of what, the initiatives?

McCAFFREY: Yeah, this is - We're now going to see this come up all over the country. And this is not paranoia on my part, this is a national legalization-of-drugs strategy. It's not paranoia on my part.<sup>243</sup>

That was an excerpt from a 1996 phone conversation between journalist A M Rosenthal and then drug czar (ONDCP director) Barry McCaffrey. ("McCaffrey routinely recorded telephone conversations with journalists, often without their knowledge."<sup>244</sup>) This particular recording is especially notable in retrospect, for it reveals what appears to be a high-level chat about themes that have subsequently been well used by prohibitionists in the following years. What was to be the agreed-upon tact, the party line concerning this hated group of people who dare to oppose the war? The trouble, the slogans were to say, was this "Soros" fellow, and his filthy lucre; filthy because he and others are helping organizations that question the jailing of citizens for using drugs. Well, it isn't to be put that way, exactly. The idea is to say as little as possible about that "jail" business. But play up that big bad Soros and his money and how he's "pro-drug" and a traitor in this holy war on drugs.

When considering laws that jail fewer drug users, one politician called for "a 'full disclosure to the New Mexico people' of who is funding efforts to liberalize drug laws in the state. 'It is my understanding that the current effort is being financed, in particular, by New York billionaire George Soros through his pro-drug organization, the Lindesmith Center,' Domenici said in a news release. 'This group has contracted high-paid political lobbyists and paid for a barrage of pro-marijuana radio ads that have blanketed our state.'"<sup>245</sup> In another state, a "concerned parent" group lobbied for the continued jailing of medical

## Drug War Propaganda

marijuana users. Scoffing at the idea that marijuana could have medical uses, the group saw the sinister forces of Soros behind the questioning of laws imprisoning medical marijuana patients: "a staunch opponent of the bill, denounced the medicinal marijuana initiative as 'a fraud and a hoax' funded by 'four fat-cat billionaires,' including international financier George Soros."<sup>246</sup>

Prohibitionists frequently insinuate that Soros and other defectors in the war are secretly motivated by desire to legalize all drugs, with their inconvenient questioning of the war. Concerns about jailing peaceful adults who use marijuana, questions about prison for harmless medical marijuana users are painted as a plot to legalize everything for anyone. "Leaders of the legalization movement have been funded from the pockets of three individuals. One billionaire and two multimillionaires have already spent millions of dollars across the nation to place initiatives and bills on the ballot of all states. They disguise their concerns as compassion for suffering patients when in fact the concerns of these individuals lie in their desire to legalize any form of illegal drug so that the door may become open to legalization of all drugs."<sup>247</sup> The net worth of prominent dissenters is given great play; left uncomparared are the amounts that the dissenters spend against the amounts that are spent in the name of sending a "message" about "drugs." Better, instead, to attack bad "billionaires."

In one column, veteran drug warrior A M Rosenthal attacked defectors in the great crusade, claiming opposition to the war is due only to the mammon supplied by the few. Rosenthal explained that these billionaire-driven dissenters "belittle and befoul the advances made in fighting illegal drugs. Using a well-financed and skillful propaganda machine, they tell us that America has lost the drug war. They tell us that the supply, mostly provided by Latin American and Asian killer gangs, cannot be cut off. They tell us the only way to deal sensibly and humanely with drugs is to end punishment."<sup>248</sup> And what sinister creatures dare support this foul dissent? Rosenthal explains, "with money from a few billionaires, they set up and win innocuous-sounding state referendums, disguised simply as permitting the use of narcotics for sick folk. . . This is a sly crawl to legalization."<sup>249</sup> Rosenthal urges that the dissent be quashed, that the disagreeable talk be silenced by government: "the government anti-drug drive has failed to do real combat with the pro-drug lobbyists. It has not directed the disgust of

## Drug War Propaganda

society against them."<sup>250</sup>

Time after time, Rosenthal obediently attempts to pound home the "Pro Drug Millionaire" hated-group theme. Jail is not mentioned. "With propaganda funds from a few truly rich Americans" Rosenthal warns, the legalizers demoralize drug warriors. The "financier George Soros, Ohio insurance executive Peter Lewis and the founder of the for-profit University of Phoenix, John Sperling . . . hack away at the very foundation of the struggle against drugs: the three-way combination of law enforcement, interdiction and therapy."<sup>251</sup>

### Summary

We have examined some of the ways that prohibitionist propaganda associates drugs with hated groups, and groups with forbidden drugs. Needless to say, we have only scratched the surface, hitting a few common examples of this theme in modern prohibition propaganda. The theme of associating a hated group with the targeted drug is a staple of this propaganda.

Prohibitionists use the propaganda techniques of name calling and transfer. The propagandist applies the labels of hated groups to those who use drugs: "junkie," "druggie," "lame loser." We have also seen how drug warriors associate traditionally hated groups with drug users, as a means to tarnish their image. This is an application of the propaganda technique of transfer.

Propagandists smear relatively unknown drugs by linking these drugs with groups that are already hated. This was seen, for example, in attempts to associate lesser-known MDMA with the well-hated hippie culture of the 1960s.

Researchers have put forward various ideas to explain the utility of this association between hated drug and hated group. The tyrant, noted Plato, is "always stirring up some war or other in order that the people may require a leader."

A senior official in one state frankly told me that he was simply demagoguing the [drug] issue to get votes. Prosecutors at the Nuremberg trials noted a similar attitude among Nazi conspirators, in which they promoted anti-Semitism not because they were concerned about a Jewish problem but because they felt anti-Semitism would be politically popular.<sup>252</sup>

William White noted that such hated drug/group linking and

## Drug War Propaganda

scapegoating evokes deep-seated fears.

It is open to historical interpretation which the prohibitionists were more interested in prohibiting, cocaine, opium, and alcohol or the existence of blacks, Chinese, and Latinos in the United States. Although a racial theory of the development of drug control policies would be much too simplistic, it is unquestionable that the racial and "foreign conspiracy" associations with different drugs were instrumental in creating the emotional environment from which early prohibitionist laws sprang. There is also little question that modern versions of this theme continue to touch on primitive and powerful fears about the welfare of our country, our institutions, and most importantly the welfare of our children.<sup>253</sup>

Author David Baggins sheds light on the propaganda theme, seeing a struggle of cultures.

[The] view that the drug culture stood guilty of contaminating the larger society and must be neutralized and punished. For traditionalists looking to restore pre-1960s culture . . . focusing on forbidden drug use as crime; the era of the 1960s could be disparaged and the counter-culture incarcerated. . . . "the gurus of hedonism and permissiveness of the 1960s and 1970s who shared a flippant and irresponsible attitude toward drug use" are responsible. . . . the theme that in essence the drug war was about the stomping out of wrong culture. . . that the major obstacle to success of the government's offensives is the continued existence of persons "thirty-five years and older who grew up with the wrong cultural inputs." An orthodoxy solidified that the drug culture and its many correlations as countercultures were the enemy of traditional order.<sup>254</sup>

### notes

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Crime, Violence, Illness

To vilify drugs and their users, prohibitionists often associate drugs with crime, especially violent crime. The propagandist links crime, violence, illness and insanity to the targeted drug, hoping people will fear the drug and its users.

There are few limits to this prohibition theme. Any problem real or imagined will work, if the problem can be plausibly linked to the forbidden drug in the reader's mind. This theme plays squarely upon fear. Standard propaganda techniques drug warriors employ in this theme include *transfer*, and *name calling*. As always, the propaganda technique of *card stacking* is helpful in selection of events to report and emphasize.<sup>1</sup> Associating (certain) drugs with crime or illness is a classic prohibitionist propaganda theme.

The attribution of crimes of violence, sexual assault, insanity, moral decay, etc. have been an integral part of efforts to prohibit the currently illicit drugs. A key element in this theme is the arbitrary designation of "good" and "evil" drugs with evil drugs possessing powers that can overwhelm all efforts at human control. "The Devil made him do it" is changed to "the drug made him do it."<sup>2</sup>

### Drug Criminals

One editor praised a new prosecutor. "Mr. Clyne rightly makes the connection between guns and drug crimes and just as rightly concludes that if more drug suspects are sent away to prison, rather than freed on technicalities, there is a good likelihood that gun violence will also decline in the county."<sup>3</sup> Another writer spoke out against the crime he felt drugs caused: ". . . women prostituting their bodies to get money for their drugs. One prostitute was eight months pregnant and still shooting heroin into her body. She was also still out on the streets working for the money to buy her drugs. This woman had five other children, all of which were taken from her, at birth; because she tested positive for drugs, at the time of their birth. It was a blessing these children were taken from her, this woman could barely function on her own. It was

## Drug War Propaganda

obvious her brain cells were fried from all the illegal drugs she had taken."<sup>4</sup>

That drugs cause crime is axiomatic; that treating the "hooked" will eliminate crime is a given. "Califano said states can reduce crime. . . by spending money on prevention programs for children and by treating individuals 'who get hooked.'"<sup>5</sup>

Those bewitched by forbidden drugs, we are told, commit all means of ghastly crimes. This is why drugs must never be legalized, say prohibitionists. Because if drugs were made "readily available", then (we are assured) drug use -- and thus crime -- would then explode. "Those who use drugs commit crimes while under the influence, and the devastation to the rest of the family is well documented. Drug use escalates when the supply is readily available and the consequences are either weak or nonexistent. Any policy that reduces consequences for the use or makes drugs more readily available in any way can only lead to more tragedy for society."<sup>6</sup>

"Drug-related" crime, drug warriors tell us, isn't relegated to the crazed drug addict committing crimes. Drug-criminals may lurk in any boardroom. The US Law enforcement community's December 2000 International Crime Threat Assessment report told of vast white collar criminality due to drugs. "Through the use of computers, international criminals have an unprecedented capability to obtain, process and protect information and sidestep law enforcement investigations . . . They can use the interactive capabilities of advanced computers and telecommunications systems to plot marketing strategies for drugs and other illicit commodities, to find the most efficient routes and methods for smuggling and moving money in the financial system and to create false trails for law enforcement or banking security."<sup>7</sup> Another paper reminded readers of drug criminal profits: "America's money-laundering statutes define laundering as a crime if the money comes from drug trafficking, terrorism or bank fraud."<sup>8</sup>

A Wisconsin paper warned that Ritalin was increasingly targeted by criminals. "Ritalin and its generic equivalents accounted for 13% of all drugs stolen or missing from hospitals, pharmacies and physicians' offices in 1999 and 2000 in Wisconsin, said Mike Grafton, an investigator at the Drug Enforcement Administration."<sup>9</sup> Though others may sleep, the writer sees in the "Ritalin habit" an incipient epidemic of crime. "No one yet sees Ritalin's connection to crimes as an epidemic.

## Drug War Propaganda

Still, the cases such as [a 33-year-old mother of two suspected of robbing eight pharmacies] and others show the lengths people might go to feed a Ritalin habit."<sup>10</sup>

Police and politicians like to stress the connection they see between drugs and crime. "A key congressional official on crime issues said Friday he would make fighting the increasing levels of drug trafficking in South Texas his top priority for this year. [The politician] said drug trafficking is at an all-time high. He plans to meet with law enforcement officials in the next several months to come up with his anti-crime agenda."<sup>11</sup>

Given the association prohibitionists assure us exists between drugs and crime, police are only too happy to institute programs that make it easy and convenient to denounce those suspected of such "drug-related" crime. "New South Wales police say new figures highlight the increasing effectiveness of the CrimeStoppers hotline in reducing drug-related crime. . . The biggest increase is in the number of drug-related information reports, up 98 per cent last year. The coordinator of the Crime Stoppers hotline . . . says the drug related reports have led to substantial increases in drug seizures."<sup>12</sup> The name itself of this program to denounce citizens, "Crime Stoppers", can be useful in strengthening links nurtured in the reader's mind, between crime and drugs. Phrases like "drug-related crime" accomplish the same. Simply possessing a forbidden drug qualifies as a "drug-related" crime. "Whether you like it or not, drug possession is a crime and, frankly, drug users are notorious for committing other crimes."<sup>13</sup> Phrases like "drug-related crime" are crafted to blur the distinction between using drugs and acts that are traditionally considered crime, like robbery, assault, rape and murder. "Wonder just how much substance abuse contributes to putting people behind bars? The numbers say it all, says State Rep. Donna Boe, D-Pocatello: about 80 percent of the men and women in Idaho prisons are there because of committing some crime related to their drug and alcohol abuse."<sup>14</sup> Terms like "drug-related crime" are useful for insinuating that one who takes drugs is also a robber, assaultive, rapacious and a killer, without having to come right out and say it.

"Youth Crime And Drugs Linked," read an article's headline, pounding in the association. The article went on to reveal that a new "report has found young criminals are using hard drugs years before drug users who are not involved in criminal activity. An Australian Institute of

## Drug War Propaganda

Criminology report released yesterday found sentenced property offenders, on average, began using cannabis regularly at 14.7 years old."<sup>15</sup>

Editors and government officials view punishment of citizens who use forbidden drugs as sending a message. "The effort of the 80 police officers from across Porter County was necessary and sent a strong signal to drug dealers and users. The raid took 26 people off the street and the impact that will have on the availability of marijuana, cocaine, LSD, methamphetamine, Ecstasy, PCP and heroin cannot be underestimated."<sup>16</sup> Years of similar messages beat in the idea the "street" drugs are evil; the idea that only criminals use them, the idea that in an ostensibly free society, to denounce and punish fellow citizens for taking forbidden drugs is good and acceptable; the idea that to ever more harshly punish such people is virtuous.

Drug warriors blame all disturbed behaviors, especially 'crazed ax murder' type accounts, on "drugs" (that is to say, on drug *users*). Another writer bewailed what he saw as the slackness of punishment in the land. "Thugs Set Free To Strike Again," shouted the headline. "Police believe Monroe dragged the schoolteacher around her apartment by her ears as he ransacked her apartment looking for money and jewelry. The alleged crime spree could have been avoided if he had been sent back to jail earlier when he was caught breaking parole by using drugs."<sup>17</sup> "If results of blood tests show that UC Santa Barbara freshman . . . was under the influence of drugs the night he allegedly ran down five people, killing four, it will serve as another grim reminder that drugs and driving are lethal. Witnesses' accounts of . . . wild behavior after his speeding Saab slammed into pedestrians on a crowded Isla Vista street Feb. 23 indicate he may have been on drugs. If so, his name will be added to a long and growing list of drivers whose drug use had fatal consequences."<sup>18</sup> Whether or not "drug use" had "fatal consequences", the suggested association between "influence of drugs" and Grim Reaper is updated and strengthened.

The topic of long prison terms meted out to people who take forbidden drugs is perhaps an unpleasant topic. Sometimes officials find it helpful to use less offensive terms, instead; "getting tough on drugs", or "sending a message", or similar phrases. Lamented one lawmaker in hindsight, "You have to be tough on crime, but when you've got a criminal code that basically covers every crime, and there's penalties set

## Drug War Propaganda

forth for every crime, how does anybody appear tough on crime anymore?"<sup>19</sup>

By giving readers only two choices (drug users are criminals, drug users are sick), both associations may be strengthened. Examples of this are plentiful. It is often seen in the idea of "treatment or prison", a seeming dilemma presented repeatedly. Some scattered examples of this: "Feelings about whether drug use should be treated as a disease or a crime split sharply along partisan lines."<sup>20</sup> "Most were presented an option: successfully complete drug treatment or go to jail,"<sup>21</sup> "government-funded treatment centers and prison,"<sup>22</sup> for "lower-level drug offenders [government] will decide who goes to treatment and who goes to jail,"<sup>23</sup> Some ". . . argued the drug war is a failure and addicts should be treated, not imprisoned. But [a drug user] only seeks treatment when he's in criminal court."<sup>24</sup> Only two choices given: treatment or jail, or if wanting to appear innovative, a combination of treatment or jail. But those are the only options given. "Drug Court sends drug users caught in minor, nonviolent crimes to treatment, rather than prison,"<sup>25</sup> "addicted offenders face mandatory prison time if they don't stay in treatment. Most felony drug offenders get probation for their first offense."<sup>26</sup>

Government officials may use this putative dilemma to great advantage: authorities can "get tough" by extolling incarceration, or appear "compassionate" by suggesting that drug users be given a chance at treatment, first. Either way, the message being that drug users are either criminal or insane or both. "The two-year spending plan would fund a \$5 million, 500-bed Community Justice Center at an undetermined site to treat nonviolent drug offenders. While defending the drug crackdown, Rowland endorsed giving judges more latitude in sentencing nonviolent drug offenders."<sup>27</sup> Another paper gave readers a similar restricted choice: "whether drug use should be treated as a criminal act or as the symptom of a psychological problem."<sup>28</sup>

If the only two choices presented are "treatment or incarceration", many are led to believe those are the only options. (The choice of repealing prohibitions, or restoring traditional freedoms usually isn't mentioned.) But whether the "treatment" option is taken (that is to say, the user is mentally ill), or the "jail" option is assumed (that is, the user is a criminal), this theme is reinforced.

### Drug Violence

## Drug War Propaganda

Drug war rhetoric associates violence with "drugs." This increases the fear and urgency involved. Associating violence with drugs makes it easier for us to fear and hate targeted groups and drugs. "The effectiveness of propaganda may be enhanced if the source can raise anxieties and produce fear."<sup>29</sup> This is a favorite theme. "Youth violence is frequently part of a life that includes drugs, guns and sex, and the teenagers who are likely to participate are low-income males who associate with delinquent peers, the surgeon general said today."<sup>30</sup> Another paper detailed the violence of foreign cartels. "Drugs a big factor . . . Much of Tijuana's violence is due to its proximity to the lucrative U.S. drug market. The area is controlled by the Arellano cartel, responsible for much of the violence and drug trade along the western U.S-Mexico border."<sup>31</sup>

The propagandist relentlessly stresses this association. "Then, last week, the surgeon general reported on almost two years of studying youth violence, which is tied closely to the drug problem."<sup>32</sup> said one article. The association, repeatedly asserted, is often made by simple juxtaposition. "ALLENTOWN WINS A BATTLE IN WAR ON DRUGS, VIOLENCE,"<sup>33</sup> screamed one headline, effectively reinforcing the Pavlovian conditioned association between "drugs" and "violence." The article went on to symbolic and metaphoric heights in quoting police: "If a drug-trafficking organization could be described as an 'evil predator,' the predator's head was cut off on Friday, said Capt. Theodore Kohuth, Troop M commander of the Pennsylvania State Police. 'Today is a good day for Allentown,' said Kohuth during a news conference announcing the arrests of 28 people accused of drug dealing. . . The arrests seem to give police and the public a better focus on some generally accepted assumptions about drugs and violence, not only in Allentown, but across the region."<sup>34</sup> The "officers . . . had been assigned full-time to an FBI-led violent crime task force that targeted drug gangs . . . his department, with help from the state police and Lehigh County detectives, have 'the resolve' to fight drugs and violence."<sup>35</sup>

Visions of a lost paradise are made to dance before our eyes; violence is due to drugs, says the prohibitionist. The implication is that all violence is due to currently illegal drugs, and that the physiologic action of illegal drugs themselves induce violence. As one writer explained, "without the distraction, corruption and destruction of illegal drugs. . .

## Drug War Propaganda

life would be much better, and America would be a lot less violent, and a great place to live."<sup>36</sup> The "crimes and violence created by the drug culture . . . has permeated Schenectady,"<sup>37</sup> another lamented. The terms are stressed and associated, over and over. Little in the way of explaining the assumed connection between "drugs" and "violence" is offered.

A paper warned citizens of murders committed by drug users. The "city was shaken at the end of November by a double murder allegedly committed by a pair of men who were using crack cocaine. Authorities say the men then carjacked a woman downtown and killed her after leaving the state. The crime was a wake-up call for city residents who had grown uneasy at the increasing thefts. . . ."<sup>38</sup> Prescription drugs like Ritalin are sometimes associated with violence in a similar way. "Ritalin was once considered a wonder drug for hyperactive children, but there is growing evidence that adults are becoming hooked on its caffeine-like jolt and breaking the law to obtain it. Take the case of . . . a 33-year-old mother of two from Ozaukee County who is suspected of robbing eight pharmacies to obtain it. She described to authorities an addiction so out of control that she fashioned toy weapons and hogtied clerks while apologetically robbing pharmacies."<sup>39</sup>

The linkage between "drugs" and "murder" is punched time after time; much less emphasis is given the observation that prohibition itself creates illegal markets. In illegal markets, violence is often seen as an only means of settling disputes. "Three days after Christmas an Associated Press story out of Philadelphia reported: 'Four masked intruders burst into a dilapidated crack house and opened fire on 10 persons, killing seven. . . . One woman inside the house was heard screaming 'Help me! Oh my God help me!' . . . two of the victims were reported drug dealers' . . ."<sup>40</sup> "[H]e was shot five times by men who wanted him dead. He was a cocaine dealer and had knowingly stepped onto another dealer's turf. . . . [his] competitors shot him five times in the abdomen, neck and shoulder and left him for dead on an East New York sidewalk."<sup>41</sup> "Drug-related crime has been a problem in south Brooksville for a very long time. . . Three people have been shot in the area, commonly known as the Sub, in the past two months. One person died, becoming the fourth consecutive drug-related killing in the city. Each incident involved a person buying or selling crack cocaine."<sup>42</sup>

Stressing by juxtaposition associations between violent crime and



## Drug War Propaganda

drugs, a newspaper editor saw only disaster should any lessening of punishments for drug use be contemplated. "Whether one looks at murder, violent crime in general, or drug trafficking, criminals overwhelmingly victimize people like themselves. It should be obvious, then, who will be harmed most if fewer violent and repeat offenders and drug traffickers are punished and sentences are substantially reduced."<sup>43</sup>

A narcotics officer, excoriating those who believed that a five-dollar purchase of cocaine was itself a minor crime, defended powers given to narcotic officers by attempting to link violence and murder to the drug: "I fail to see how the purchase of \$5 worth of crack cocaine is a 'pretty darned piddling' crime . . . It is in fact a felony -- as it should be -- and a major problem for those of us charged with keeping our streets safe. Who needs protecting from the 'nonviolent' crime of trying to buy five bucks of crack, you ask? Everybody."<sup>44</sup> To obtain money for illegal drugs, we are told, the criminal inevitably commits violent crimes, narcotics police remind us. "He went on to describe the crimes he responds to on Houston's near north side -- 'brutal assaults, robberies, burglaries, cuttings and the occasional shooting because someone wanted \$5 to buy a crack rock. ... It's not about some mental patient buying a rock; it's about where and how she got ahold of the five bucks. Somebody else paid for that rock, she didn't."<sup>45</sup>

Drugs cause crime, authorities emphasize. "Nothing creates, encourages and promotes violence like drug dealing. Where do you think [the drug] came from? There is no [drug] fairy that distributes these little pearls for harmless little people to use in the comfort of their home. . . . visit the Houston Police Memorial, read the names in the granite, and then ask [yourself] 'how nonviolent is a substance that can produce such carnage?'"<sup>46</sup>

A headline reading, "Violent Crime And Its Causes" led readers to believe the causes of violent crime had been discovered. The article revealed that drugs caused violent crime; crime is caused by "ethnically based gangs involved in drug trafficking," which "were responsible for much of the increase in violent crime in all cities . . . Blaming ethnically based gangs, he said: 'It's related to some of the ethnicity of some of the people involved in the [drug] trade and the fact that the use of knives and guns is a more familiar part of the criminal side of those cultures than has been the case in Australia.'"<sup>47</sup>

Another writer castigated those who expressed the idea that a narcotics

## Drug War Propaganda

officer killed was "at war" with citizens; suggestions the officer was to make citizens "unfree" indicated "twisted thinking."<sup>48</sup> Usefully lumping together all types of illegal substances, the writer linked violence and forbidden drugs: "The myth that narcotics are nonviolent and harmless is a blatant lie. Narcotics are harmful to the human body and the human mind. Drug use tears apart our social fabric. I know children who have been raped and beaten because their parents were drug-addicted and negligent. These tragedies occur daily across the nation. Don't tell me drug use is harmless."<sup>49</sup> In an especially Orwellian use of the word "free",<sup>50</sup> the writer then equivocated the narcotics officer "was attempting to make South Atlanta free for our children. Free from chemical addiction, murder, prostitution and gang activity."<sup>51</sup>

### Conflation

In the propaganda of prohibition, it is often useful to blend together different aspects of various substances, claiming that "drugs" lead to death or at least mental and bodily illness. "'YOU ARE ALL potential customers of death and destruction,' the Suffolk County Police Department representative said. His words sent a chill down my spine, though I'm not sure they were understood by the 200 fifth graders who sat in the school cafeteria for their DARE graduation the other day, my daughter among them. He was referring to the fact that someone may try to sell them drugs . . ."<sup>52</sup>

Sometimes it is helpful to enlist the woes caused by any and every drug, when talking about a specific substance. If using a certain drug isn't associated with a given problem, drift over into a more helpful "drugs," instead. "How ironic that a marijuana legalization endorsement . . . follows in the footsteps of [the newspaper] series, 'Violence: A Hidden Epidemic.' It's misguided journalism to overlook the direct link between violence and marijuana or other drug use."<sup>53</sup> "The lesson about the perils of drugs has come at an incredible cost. . . . drugs have gained a highly idealized reputation as a path of emotional release in modern times. This romantic view, pedalled hard by the marijuana traders of Nimbin and the amphetamine salesmen of the Gold Coast night scene, rarely includes the awful down side of their seedy trade. . . . about deaths, about scrambled minds, about armed robbery . . ."<sup>54</sup>

One business periodical linked all means of malady and disaster to

## Drug War Propaganda

"drug abuse" and urged greater testing of employees. "Other signs of chemical problems may include increased workers' compensation claims, performance problems, poor quality of work or increased customers complaints. . . . drug abuse costs companies about \$98 billion a year. Stress on co-workers who continually fill in for absent or tardy individuals, mood swings that impact co-workers, damage to equipment, drain on supervisory times, and poor reflection to the company's public image."<sup>55</sup> In exhorting government to take greater action against citizens who take forbidden substances, an editor recounted a litany of horror: "users are chancing addiction, irreversible physical or mental impairment and death."<sup>56</sup> Another writer spoke of the destruction of the young, due to drugs: "Since Houston is a hub for the distribution of illicit narcotics in the country, our children need this instruction desperately. Drugs destroy children and families from all walks of life. They don't discriminate against race, religion, gender or the educated."<sup>57</sup>

Throwing pretense of objectivity aside, one paper pledged to help by dismissing debate about "drug abuse", in favor of action. "The Herald Sun will do all it can to help what it believes to be a positive, focused attempt to fight the drug problem. Too often in the past, measures against drug abuse have been plotted according to opinion polls and elections. The time is right to take politics out of the debate and aim all of our community energy in the same direction. As Mr Comrie said: 'We've had the debate . . . let's get on with some action.'"<sup>58</sup> A dealer's violent death at the hands of robbers is blamed on the dead person's friends and customers; left unchallenged is the association between drugs and violence. Wrote a local newspaper editor: "It's time to roll the final credits. Monday morning, school district counselors were at Royal Palm Beach High to talk with grieving students. Wednesday morning, his parents held [the] funeral. Wade and Walker have been charged with first-degree murder and armed robbery. . . . we should take a long look at the other players, the customers who were waiting to purchase [drugs]. . . . they, too, played major roles. They helped make [him] 'the man' -- just like on TV."<sup>59</sup>

### Drug-Related

The phrase "drug-related crime" may be used to associate all types of

## Drug War Propaganda

horrendous violence and victimization with drugs, when the actual "crime" is often the crime of using drugs itself. "Drug-related crime is estimated to cost the country around [UK pounds] 2.5bn a year, while almost two-thirds of criminals test positive for one or more drugs."<sup>60</sup> Since heroin and crack are washed out of the body in hours, whereas cannabis remains detectable in trace amounts for weeks after use, the "drug-related crime" is often a positive test for cannabis. Frequently, it is useful to sandwich "drugs" in the midst of a list of violent crimes. By juxtaposition, again, drugs may be associated with crime. "The U.S. Justice Department has awarded a \$175,000 grant to Pine Bluff to help 'weed out' crime, drug use and gang activity in high-crime neighborhoods, U.S. Sens. Tim Hutchinson, R-Ark., and Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., said Tuesday."<sup>61</sup>

Despite the fact that more people than ever are arrested for "drug related crimes", and jailed at historically high levels, zealous drug warriors see increasing incarcerations for drugs as evidence that more of the same must be done. In an article berating a newly-elected politician for neglecting the drug war, a writer saw vast scenes of drug user devastation: "He did not exaggerate. In those years, high-school seniors who were current drug users dropped from 38.9 percent to 14.4 percent. Under Clinton, the drug culture rebounded. Last year, 25.1 percent of seniors used drugs in the past 30 days. Drug-related emergency-room admissions are at a historic high -- over 555,000 in 1999. Illegal drugs cost America \$300 billion annually in health-care expenditures, crime and lost productivity. The human cost is incalculable."<sup>62</sup>

Given the level of moral panic that accompanies such reports, a mere mention of "drugs" is enough for a pro-forma sign-off for government force to be used. This is justified to prevent the terrible violence of the drug user. "In the Wilson affidavit, police refer to drug trafficking. The reasons for their suspicions have been deleted. 'Based on [INFORMATION DELETED], the fact that drug trafficking is an inherently dangerous endeavor, and Wilson's apparent willingness to use and carry firearms,' ATF agents believed Wilson 'presents a danger to the occupants of the residence and the executing officers,' the affidavit states."<sup>63</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

Denouncing a popular movie concerning the importation of forbidden drugs, former government officials stressed the link between drugs and crime. "It is true that the number of people arrested for drug crimes has grown, arguably one reason why drug crimes are down. . . . programs to break the cycle of drugs and crime [exist] . . . drug-addicted offenders [are given] supervised treatment in lieu of jail."<sup>64</sup> The former officials continued, continually emphasizing this theme, ending with an attack on the target of legalization: "Nor would legalization cut crime. . . . Most drug-related crime is committed by addicts to get money to buy drugs -- the vast majority of drug users rely to some degree on illicit money to support their addiction. Legalization would only increase the number of people robbing, stealing and prostituting themselves for drug cash."<sup>65</sup>

### Deadly Drug Use

"Drug use" is often a favorite scapegoat for crime and disease in general. The exact type of "drug" is often left unspecified. One editorialist, in a column entitled, "Drug Scourge," went on to describe this scourge stalking the countryside, and the cure thereof: ". . . since drugs are the root cause of so many other crimes, from break and enters to armed robberies, the situation is alarmingly frustrating to the force. If [government] could severely hamper drug use, there would be fewer other crimes. It's a vicious circle. If police could drive out the drug pushers, they would be simultaneously driving down the crime rate."<sup>66</sup> (A corollary of this assumption being that if drug takers were not jailed, surely there would be more drug taking, thus more "other crimes.") A foundation that has heavily invested in prohibitionist propaganda (and a major source of funding<sup>67</sup> for the "Partnership for a Drug-Free America" organization), echoes the "Public Enemy Number One!"<sup>68,69</sup> themes of earlier eras: "Substance Abuse Number One Health Problem," announced the wire service headline. "Drug abuse remains the number one health problem in the US, according to a report released Friday by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in Washington, DC."<sup>70</sup> The story went on to paint a picture of the wasteland: "About 430,700 deaths each year are attributed to tobacco abuse and more than 100,000 deaths are caused by alcohol abuse. Illicit drug use causes nearly 16,000 deaths each year."<sup>71</sup>

An accident victim was found to have traces of unspecified

## Drug War Propaganda

"drugs" (probably marijuana) in his body. A local paper gave this great play for demonstrating the dangers of drugs. "Anyone who still wonders about the need for the St. Lawrence County and Ogdensburg's drug task force should look no farther than the recent events that have shaken this community. The alleged murder of 16 year old Andrew O'Marah is being described by those close to the case as directly connected with drugs. The Grand Jury has alleged that Mr. O'Marah was shoved into the river when he was intoxicated on drugs. . . . the 19 year old accused of the murder allegedly was on drugs at the time. . . . there are still lessons to be drawn from this tragedy. OFA and Ogdensburg does have a drug problem."<sup>72</sup>

Citing statistics from an unknown source, one writer, moved by "the cocaine-related death of our son 15 years ago," asserted "In 1998 nearly 16,000 children died as a result of drug use."<sup>73</sup> Another writer implied that bodily response to drugs is dependent on their legal status: "Drugs bring about a physiological change. If used illicitly, a drug poses a serious health risk for not only users but also those around them. . . . The effects of drug abuse ranges from impaired memory and perception to convulsions and coma, from sleeplessness and anxiety to psychological and physical dependence, from loss of appetite and nausea to emotional breakdown and possibly death."<sup>74</sup> Precisely which drugs caused convulsions, coma and death were not revealed.

In a call to make the "Drug War a National Priority," an editorialist rallied the troops: "Substance abuse is one of our nation's most pervasive problems. Addiction is a disease that does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, socio-economic status, race or creed. Alarming, more than three-quarters of new heroin users in 1999 were between age 12 and 25."<sup>75</sup> Likewise, an editorial from the United Arab Emirates saw much of the world's misery as caused by drugs: "The report also points to the broader implications of the world's drug problem, including the spread of HIV/Aids and other diseases, money laundering, corruption and financing of insurgents and terrorists."<sup>76</sup> The writer continued, describing a new golden age to come: "The eradication of drug production has to be accompanied by a range of other measures like poverty alleviation, conflict resolution, mediation and institution building."<sup>77</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

No problem shall go unattributed to "drugs", it seems. The forbidden drug is the opposite of a panacea: rather than a cure-all, the illicit drug, as portrayed by officialdom, is viewed as an agent capable of causing all type of loathsome disease and problem.<sup>78</sup> An editorial in a Utah paper made the now-familiar declaration that drug users are sick, criminal or both: "As the administrative coordinator for the Board of Pardons and Parole said, the program throws open the 'old debate over whether drug use is a sickness or a crime.' Frankly, it can be both. [Government] cannot afford to begin sending a message that drug abuse is anything less than a crime that menaces society."<sup>79</sup> The writer proceeded to tell of the woes assumed to be caused by drugs: "Illegal drugs cause harm. Even the drug users who are not themselves violent are implicitly connected with the violence and harm that accompanies the drug from its manufacture to the moment it reaches their hands. This harm ranges from the poverty that spreads through Third World countries, where cartels force farmland to be used for drug-related crops rather than food, to the violent gang culture that invades many U.S. cities."<sup>80</sup> Left unspoken were questions about harms caused by prohibition, as opposed to the problems caused by the drugs themselves. The writer went on to emphasize the nature of this deadly bane, predictably casting out the demon of legalization: "In addition, the drugs cause irreparable harm to their users, and these often are young people enticed with lies. To decriminalize such a scourge would be an outrage. The same could be said for anything that sends a message to potential users that the crime carries no real punishment."<sup>81</sup>

Citing "experts" and repeating a familiar list of problems caused by "teen-age drug use", an editor pleaded for a program of coerced treatment. "Statewide, 82 percent of teen-agers locked up in juvenile detention centers report a drug addiction problem, about the same percentage as adult inmates . . . The cost to society is great, with local, state and social institutions straining under the economic costs of teen-age drug use. Medical care, mental health care, the criminal justice system, Child Protective Services, foster care, the morgue -- all those systems are greatly affected by the consequences of untreated drug addiction, Stark said."<sup>82</sup>

In a dramatic attempt to scare students away from drugs, police are paid to present a theatre of horrors: "Next up was Officer Shawn Carey,

## **Drug War Propaganda**

whose presentation was called 'Welcome Home.' Instead of the happiness those words imply, the students saw blowups of scenes from grotesque drug dens: a jar filled with cockroaches used for play by addicts' children; a filthy toy rocking horse that kept children occupied while their mother or father shot up. . . . an officer who was shaking a blue body bag as he hustled it up and down the aisles. The bag is used for trips to the morgue . . . 'After we stuff your body in it, we will drag you out,' he said."<sup>83</sup> "Known as BD, 1,4-butanediol metabolizes into GHB in the user's body. Both drugs, according to recent medical studies, can send a user into a coma and lead to death. But neither [father and son] knew how dangerous BD was to use -- or to stop using. Unable to withstand the roller coaster of withdrawal symptoms -- a sleepless night that included confusion, delirium and tremors -- Tyler suffered what his father called a 'mental collapse' and fatally shot himself outside their house . . ."<sup>84</sup> A former user dutifully tells of the dangers of drugs: "At the time I thought (drugs) were a great help to my acting. They were really crutches. They make you schizo and paranoid and out of control."<sup>85</sup>

The emotional temperature surrounding the issue of deadly drugs gives officials and authorities reason to be loudly cautious. In some cases, students possessing anything that looks like a tablet are suspended; concerned school administrators can never appear harsh enough, when the subject is drugs. "Some of these prescription drugs are considered dangerous drugs," an official was quoted as saying. "I don't know anything about Claritin, but once it ends up in somebody's possession, who knows whose hands it's going to end up in. We just can't have those kinds of drugs floating around our school."<sup>86</sup> Likewise, mind-altering substances are not the only types of drugs blamed for waves of crime. "Man Arrested In Theft Of Viagra . . . According to police reports, the armed robbery occurred about 10:45 a.m. Tuesday at St. Luke's Hospital Pharmacy, 1244 S. Wisconsin Ave., after a man had visited the dispensary several times. The robber received two full and two partial bottles of the drug, which treats erectile dysfunction, and then fled on foot."<sup>87</sup>

### **Cannabis-related Crime/Illness**

Prohibition propaganda paints pot as a harmful, poisonous, deadly,



## **Drug War Propaganda**

laziness-creating yet violence-inducing substance.

Cannabis has no known lethal dose. It is impossible to poison a person simply by giving them too much marijuana. Marijuana is relaxing for most people. These and other observations present problems for the prohibitionist propagandist, ones that are solved with the usual imaginative zeal. As for other themes, the propagandist will attempt to build upon whatever negative associations can be made to stick. If the pot smoker becomes jovial, this is converted into maniacal cackling, pathological in character. If the cannabis user becomes relaxed, this is spun into laziness: amotivational syndrome for the science-minded. If one who takes marijuana has a change in perspective, and sees the world differently; this is transformed into all types of mental malady. If one takes cannabis and becomes more cautious, deliberate, or careful than before, this is proof of paranoia.

Cannabis has a calming effect on most people.<sup>88, 89</sup> To compensate for this, two basic tacts are pursued by the propagandist. The first and oldest option is to overcome this by saying all the more that cannabis use induces violence. This is the classic reefer madness tact. Cannabis relaxes, so portray it all the more as violence-provoking. (While this is occasionally seen in modern prohibition propaganda, this strategy was successfully employed in the early and mid 20th century and was more often seen then.) At the same time, the other tact that may be pursued -- with no obvious sense of contradiction displayed--, is to depict marijuana as causing great sloth (the "amotivational syndrome").

### **Cannabis Crime**

Prohibition propaganda occasionally associates cannabis with violence. This sometimes happens because it is traded on an illegal market, a market that cannot look to government for standards, or for resolution of disputes. In many urban US markets, marijuana's prohibition-inflated price, ounce for ounce, is about the same price as gold. This also creates an extremely powerful temptation to a would-be thief. A New York paper gave officials' account of violence linked to cannabis trafficking: "Investigators said that the killings reflect how the marijuana trade -- long viewed as among the cheapest and most benign kinds of drug trafficking -- has become more violent as prices have

## Drug War Propaganda

increased. . . . police said they believe that the two suspects knew of [the victim's] cash business, and set out to rob her."<sup>90</sup> Of the same event, another New York paper's headline screamed, "Marijuana Trade 'Not A Victimless Crime' ." The article gave great play to police-stressed associations. "The marijuana-related shooting of five people . . . exposes the myth that the pot trade isn't associated with violence, law enforcement officials said . . . The sale and use of marijuana, said Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik, 'is not a victimless crime. Anyone who believes it is should have been in that apartment ... and seen those victims on the floor, bound and gagged. These people were executed over marijuana.' Bridget Brennan, the city's special narcotics prosecutor, agrees. 'Marijuana is a highly profitable drug,' she said, 'Money is the source of most narcotics disputes. These guys can't settle their disputes in court.'"<sup>91</sup> And why might that be? The word "prohibition", evoking memories of the failed Prohibition of Alcohol, isn't mentioned. Instead, the *marijuana causes crime* theme is pushed for all it is worth: "Brennan adds that although marijuana tends to be viewed 'as something benign,' the groups moving marijuana are some of the same that are moving cocaine and heroin. 'We are seeing some of the traffickers up from South America mixing loads,' she said."<sup>92</sup> Neither is the Dutch experience and goal of separation of markets mentioned in these instances.

Still, such accounts of what passes for cannabis-related violence seem far less numerous than accounts of other types of claims about the dangers of marijuana (namely insanity and sloth). One paper told of illicit marijuana growing in a park, and the crime generated by that: "Although one armed grower was killed this year by a CAMP agent -- the first fatality in the campaign's 15-year history -- most raids net plants but no growers."<sup>93</sup> Another paper warned what can happen when sales are forced into illicit markets. "In Roanoke's worst arson case, for example, six people were killed in a fire started over the botched purchase of a \$10 bag of marijuana."<sup>94</sup>

Due to the evils of marijuana, we are told, long prison terms are justified for people caught growing small amounts of marijuana in their homes, especially if such persons request a jury trial. "Police said they confiscated more than 100 plants, worth about \$180,000 on the street. He admits to having 30, including what he told Stern were 'six or eight

## Drug War Propaganda

really good ones.' A grand jury indicted him in October 1999 on a charge of manufacturing or possessing marijuana with the intent to manufacture it for others' use. That charge doesn't require proof that Lynch sold his dope. A conviction carries a maximum penalty of 30 years, but his former attorney, Assistant Public Defender Jay Finch, has said a plea bargain could lower that to six months in jail."<sup>95</sup> One writer explained why long jail terms are needed for people who possess small amounts of marijuana: "We do need to worry about guns, fighting and stronger drugs. But, in order to do that we have to stop the behaviors of individuals before they progress to this level of danger."<sup>96</sup>

In another locale, police said the existence of international weapons markets justified the need to raid citizens accused of growing of marijuana in their homes: "police appear to be stepping up their relentless campaigns to bust grow operations. . . . 'Marijuana is one of the commodities that is used in national and international markets as a trading chip for other drugs and weapons,' said [police spokesperson] Learned. 'And it is one of the commodities used by organized crime.'"<sup>97</sup> Other officials agreed: "money does not come back to Canada. Those who bought the tonnes of pot from their Canadian suppliers trade it for cocaine, guns and other chemical drugs like ecstasy. 'When the growers say they're putting money back into the economy, maybe they are,' he said. 'Maybe they did buy a car in Fernie from pot profits. But what about the person they sold the pot to? They're now trading it and bringing back the drugs that could kill you in a single dose. 'It's not a good tradeoff.'"<sup>98</sup>

Another report, "Marijuana Link To Crime," was careful to not explicitly assert that marijuana *caused* crime; the report just insinuated the causal connection, instead. "Every second person arrested by police in Australia is under the influence of marijuana, Federal Government figures show," began the article. "The findings came from a comprehensive testing program of prisoners at police stations across the country, Justice Minister Chris Ellison said. 'The testing, for the first time, provides the criminal justice system with quality data on the drugs-crime link, Senator Ellison said.'"<sup>99</sup> The politicians' quoted testimonial, like the reporter, studiously avoids explicitly saying that cannabis *causes* criminal behavior. The reader is left to make that leap after reading the report's insinuations.

## Drug War Propaganda

### Marijuana Malady

According to a 1988 ruling by the DEA's chief administrative-law judge, Francis Young, marijuana is "one of the safest therapeutically active substances known." The DEA judge urged that marijuana be reclassified to Schedule II (the same as prescription painkillers like codeine or morphine), saying it is "unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious for DEA to continue to stand between those sufferers and the benefits of (marijuana)."<sup>100</sup> As mentioned earlier, this problem for the prohibition propagandist is surmounted by exaggerating and emphasizing whatever marijuana harm can be made believable.

Cannabis, as for other some other substances (like Vitamin E, for example) is fat-soluble. "According to George Biernson of Woburn, a retired engineer and author of a self-published treatise, 'Dispelling the Marijuana Myth,' pot 'is more dangerous than heroin, cocaine, alcohol or tobacco' because its key psychoactive ingredient, delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, stays 'stored in fat cells' long after it is smoked. 'We have seen that marijuana badly damages immune systems,' Biernson said. 'How can we justify telling unfortunate AIDS patients they should smoke marijuana to lessen their pain? Instead we should be shouting out: With your weakened immune systems, you should consider marijuana to be the worst form of poison!' And Gen. Barry McCaffrey, the drug czar under President Clinton, belittled medical marijuana during his tenure, saying: 'The argument that this chemical needs to be smoked doesn't make sense.'"<sup>101</sup>

It is common in this theme to claim that marijuana is very harmful because it may be smoked. "The smoking of marijuana actually will cause more harm than benefits for the ill, predicted Ken Fithen of Sherwood, the associate director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council. He said the inhalation of smoke is dangerous when cigarettes are involved and even more dangerous with marijuana."<sup>102</sup> "To argue that marijuana is a medical necessity is nothing short of ludicrous. It is common knowledge that marijuana smoke is 10 times worse than tobacco smoke. . . . It has been proven that prolonged use of THC negatively affects consciousness, memory, coordination, and the immune system. THC is known to be gametotoxic and fetotoxic."<sup>103</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

A family therapist told of the harms caused by cannabis. "Marijuana, Volker said, is not a medically proven treatment for illness, despite this trial, and is believed to be harmful by her peers who deal with addictive behavior. She said the marijuana available today is much stronger than that which was available in the past, it has negative impact on the body's immune systems, and it 'shuts down the brain.' There are better legal drugs available in almost all cases, she said."<sup>104</sup> Another writer related some of the harm prohibitionists assert is caused by cannabis: "They cite studies which show that THC, the active ingredient in marijuana can be damaging, in a time and dose-related fashion, to brain functions affecting memory and co-ordination. They also raise questions about the long-term impact of THC on the heart, lung, kidney and reproductive system. Marijuana smoke may ultimately prove to be as damaging to health as cigarette smoke. . ."<sup>105</sup>

Describing "Medicinal Marijuana" as a "Mine Field", an editorial warned of the pitfalls of pot: "Much current marijuana is far more potent, mind-altering and harmful than before. The side effects can outweigh the benefits. Tests show pot smoking can damage the heart, lungs, brain, reproductive organs and the immune system. It can be especially dangerous to those who seek it the most, suffering chronic, intractable illnesses."<sup>106</sup> Likewise claiming that marijuana damaged the brain, another article detailed the insidious impact of marijuana:

Marijuana use is not largely benign like some of its advocates would like the public to believe. The active ingredient in marijuana -- THC -- is very potent. Minute amounts will disrupt brain cell chemistry as evidenced by the 'high or stoned' feeling. Brain cell changes are clearly visible through an electron microscope. Marijuana is a neuro-toxic drug.

Marijuana is not a pure substance but is an unstable, varying, complex mixture of over 400 chemicals. When marijuana is smoked, it produces 2,000 identifiable toxic and cancer causing chemicals, 61 of which are unique to marijuana. Some of these cancer causing substances are found in much higher concentrations in marijuana smoke than tobacco smoke.

Numerous studies in the American Journal Respiratory Care

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Medicine, Australia/New Zealand Journal of Medicine and the New England Journal of Medicine, have documented that marijuana poses health risks to its users, especially those with compromised immune defense systems. In AIDS patients, marijuana use has been associated with increased fungal and bacterial pneumonia. Marijuana smoke produces airway injury, acute and chronic bronchitis and lung inflammation.

Marijuana smoke produces four times the amount of tar and carbon monoxide compared to tobacco smoke. It has concealed harmful effects of the immune defenses in the lungs. The American Journal of Respiratory Critical Care Medicine documented in 1997 that marijuana smoke in the lungs impairs the ability of the blood cells to engulf and kill both bacteria and tumour cells.<sup>107</sup>

Not explained in this piece was how the THC in marijuana could be "neuro-toxic", while at the same time, FDA-approved doctor-prescribed THC ("Marinol" etc.) was free from worry about disrupted brain cell chemistry and toxic brain changes. While dwelling on the dangers of marijuana, such inconsistencies might be usefully dropped, as to not muddy the "marijuana is bad" message. Other portions of the article draw attention to the dangers of marijuana *smoking*, forgetting that smoke-free methods of ingestion exist. Again, it may look better to omit such troublesome details, as to not confuse young minds.

One writer even argued that marijuana was deadly: "Check out the scientific literature and actual research, not letters of opinion printed in scientific journals and then quoted later as fact. You will see that marijuana is ultimately far more dangerous than tobacco and that hybridization techniques are creating strains of the plant that are so potent they are potentially lethal."<sup>108</sup>

### **Toking Threat to Body and Soul**

"We already know of some of the things marijuana does to its users," one writer asserted. "The drug -- and it is a drug -- causes disorientation and, among those who smoke it frequently, a telltale pop-eyed look. It has also been associated with mental problems and lung cancer."<sup>109</sup> In a cluster of stories appearing in the British and Australian press, cannabis

## Drug War Propaganda

was painted as wrecking havoc upon the human mind and body. Users were said to be in continual danger: "Thousands of casual marijuana smokers who have a joint on the weekend were unaware that they were affected throughout the rest of the week, a drug expert said yesterday. . . . a Sydney doctor, said the chemicals in one marijuana cigarette lasted for weeks, leaving the smoker with greater anxiety, depression, slower reaction time and a 'cognitive deficit' that reduced the person's ability to distinguish 'relevant from irrelevant material'. One joint a week . . . could mean being permanently under the influence of marijuana. . . . [the doctor], who researches the effects of marijuana on the brain and helps patients quit the drug, said marijuana 'hangs around' in the body more than any other drug because it is absorbed by fat. [The doctor] discovered a link between his patients with schizophrenia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and the use of marijuana. [He] was a speaker at yesterday's 2000 Australian Drug Summit."<sup>110</sup>

A British tabloid passionately reported of the killer: "Cannabis Can Kill You," shouted the headline. The story went on to offer a list of pot problems: "Top politicians, police chiefs and even some doctors are implying the drug should be regarded as a 'safe' way to relax. But they are the dopes. Cannabis KILLS. Cannabis smoke contains FOUR TIMES as many cancer-causing chemicals as tobacco smoke, and can also lead to lung cancer, bronchitis and emphysema. There is also evidence it can trigger heart attacks. The drug can cause hallucinations, aggravate schizophrenia and other mental disorders and undermine the effects of anti-psychotic treatment. Other effects include infertility and impotence. Excessive use has been linked to low sperm count and, in women, reduced fertility."<sup>111</sup>

"Cannabis No Soft Drug," trumpeted another Australian paper, warning of manifold marijuana miseries. Quoting a "consultant psychophysiolgist" the paper cautioned readers: "cannabis was not a soft, recreational drug that should be legitimised. . . . while most people knew of the cancer-causing effects of tobacco, cannabis was 50-70% cent more carcinogenic. Cannabis was also a major cause of schizophrenia . . . From 1993 to 1997 the number of people who presented to psychiatric units as a result of cannabis-induced psychosis rose from 15% to 26%. There needed to be greater focus on the health risks of using cannabis."<sup>112</sup> The paper proceeded to tell of marijuana's

## Drug War Propaganda

dangers to "fat protein cells" in the body: "Cannabis was fat-soluble, sticking like glue to fat protein cells in the brain, liver and reproductive systems."<sup>113</sup>

Likewise, a British paper proclaimed that "Research Shatters Myth That Cannabis Is Safe . . . In another review published by the journal, [a professor] from the University of Newcastle, pointed out that cannabis affected almost every bodily system. As well as producing severe anxiety, panic, paranoia and psychosis in high doses, it also impaired memory and concentration, and had a number of physical effects. These included heart problems that might be serious for people with preexisting cardiac disease, and suppression of the immune system."<sup>114</sup> No examples of persons suffering from such cannabis-caused disease were offered.

In an article entitled, "Scientists List Mental Risks From Smoking Cannabis," another paper presented a checklist of terrible marijuana diseases:

'Health workers need to recognise, and respond to, the adverse effects of cannabis on mental health.' . . . smoking marijuana also imposes a price. Last year US researchers showed that squirrel monkeys found the drug addictive, and a Boston team reported that, an hour after inhaling, the risk of heart attack increased fivefold. [a researcher] reports in the same journal that besides producing severe anxiety, panic, paranoia and psychosis in high doses, cannabis impaired memory and concentration.

There could be heart problems for people with pre-existing cardiac disease, and the drug also suppressed the immune system. Cannabis cigarettes could be as addictive as nicotine, and the tars from cannabis cigarettes contained higher levels of some cancer-causing chemicals than tobacco. Smoking three or four reefers a day produced the same risk of bronchitis or emphysema as 20 or more cigarettes. Chronic use might also cause complications in pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>115</sup>

The formula for such reports seems to be: don't mention prescription THC, don't mention the non-addictiveness of prescription THC. *Do*



## Drug War Propaganda

stress the dangers of smoking. Don't mention cannabis may be eaten or vaporized. It is important for the propagandist to not present caveats, qualifications and contradictions that may confuse the message.

One politician, seeking to garner support for his desire to ban devices reducing harms associated with smoking, asserted that destruction of the brain would result from using cannabis: "'Marijuana's addictiveness, cancer-causing and brain-destroying properties have meant it is an illegal drug in Queensland. The sale of devices that promote its use should also be illegal,' Cr Shelton said."<sup>116</sup> Another writer likewise listed marijuana's dire effects on memory and mood: ". . . it is also medically documented that [marijuana] alters mood, memory, motor coordination, cognitive ability and self-perception. It also affects complex sensory perception, concentration and information processing. Higher doses can produce delusions, paranoid feelings, anxiety and panic. It also increases the systolic blood pressure related to an increased heart rate."<sup>117</sup>

Nearly all plants, including ones we consume (apples, lettuce, carrots, etc.) are composed of many hundreds of chemicals. In the case of cannabis, however, the many chemicals present in plants become menacing indications of harm: "There are more than 400 chemicals in raw marijuana; most have never been analyzed."<sup>118</sup> As for all plants, qualities of individual plants may differ; when the plant spoken of is cannabis, this becomes another mark in the "negatives" column: "Its potency can vary greatly from batch to batch. . . ."<sup>119</sup> Arguing for the jailing of medical cannabis users, a column proceeded to list the evils that would befall the nation should this not happen: "Marijuana is a narcotic. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network, marijuana use accounted for 87,150 emergency-room admissions in 1999, up 455 percent from a decade earlier. Longtime users (who spend an estimated 27 percent of their income on the drug) suffer withdrawal symptoms and usually need some type of therapy to stop."<sup>120</sup>

In a piece entitled, "Patient Touts Benefits Of Medical Marijuana," a medical doctor urged that the laws (jailing patients who used marijuana medically) not be changed: ". . . Dr. Michael Miller, speaking on behalf of the Wisconsin Medical Society . . . urged the committee not to 'get ahead of the science.' . . . pharmaceutical versions of marijuana's active

## Drug War Propaganda

ingredient have some medicinal benefits, smoked marijuana has none . . . Until valid and accepted medical research demonstrates that the benefits of smoking marijuana outweigh its [potential] consequences, the drug should not be legalized in Wisconsin or elsewhere . . . 'Marijuana is not a benign drug. Addiction to marijuana can and does occur. Dysfunction and disability do result. Families can be destroyed by cannabis addiction,' he said. 'The risks of legalizing smoked marijuana are great . . .'"<sup>121</sup> Apparently Dr. Miller was less concerned about the effects of prison terms for medical marijuana users; the article never mentions such "details." Similarly, a DEA bureaucrat was concerned about the dangers of marijuana. "The label on Marynol cautions users that this drug causes addiction and long term psychotic behavior," the former DEA bureaucrat asserted. "If marijuana was used as a medicine, it should face the same standards that all medicines have to go through. It should go through the FDA process," he claimed.<sup>122</sup> Jailing marijuana users was not mentioned. Neither were other traditional herbal remedies, like St. John's Wort, mentioned.

"Doctors Question Use Of Pot To Treat Illness," warned another headline. The article presented a series of societal problems sure to follow: "The association said it hopes government will be prepared to adequately treat those individuals who have developed dependency or other adverse consequences from the use of marijuana. The new regulations suggest the method of delivery will be by inhalation, or smoking, which means all the other compounds that may be harmful are also inhaled in an attempt to obtain the active compounds."<sup>123</sup> Making a great deal over the possibility that patients may also consume cannabis by smoking, the doctors' organization compared cannabis smoking to tobacco, before going on to tell of the insanity and horrible accidents caused by cannabis: "It's been calculated that smoking three to four cannabis cigarettes a day causes the same damage to health as 20 or more tobacco cigarettes a day, says the society. Among those who have taken cannabis, one in 10 is at risk of dependence. Other problems include risk of psychotic episodes and aggravation of schizophrenia. Cannabis is the most common drug, apart from alcohol, detected in drivers involved in fatal accidents or stopped for impaired driving, the society says."<sup>124</sup>

While many government officials, authorities, and experts see abject

## Drug War Propaganda

scenes of disease and injury because of cannabis use, others are more circumspect. "The National Institute on Drug Abuse funds 80 percent of the studies on marijuana, and it is only interested in funding those that show the harm of the drug,' says Dr. John P. Morgan, professor of pharmacology at the City of New York Medical School . . . 'It doesn't like to fund studies that seek to demonstrate the drug's benefits.' Beginning in the late '70s, government reports claimed that marijuana, among other things, killed brain cells, damaged chromosomes, caused infertility, destroyed motivation, and caused men to grow breasts -- though these conclusions were often based on 'bad science or animal studies that had never been replicated with humans,' Morgan says."<sup>125</sup>

### Cannabis Crazies

*"Marihuana is that drug -- a violent narcotic -an unspeakable scourge -- The Real Public Enemy Number One !  
Its first effect is sudden violent, uncontrollable laughter, then come dangerous hallucinations -- space expands -- time slows down, almost stands still ....fixed ideas come next, conjuring up monstrous extravagances -- followed by emotional disturbances, the total inability to direct thoughts, the loss of all power to resist physical emotions leading finally to acts of shocking violence ... ending often in incurable insanity."<sup>126</sup>*

#### Reefer Madness, 1936

Some have noted the relative harmlessness of cannabis makes more urgent the need for government generated propaganda claiming the opposite.<sup>127</sup> One important way the propagandist may accomplish this is to emphasize the traditional cannabis stereotypes. Sometimes writers may use gross exaggerations of marijuana's effects to create stereotypes. In other instances, such as the classic "Reefer Madness", the writer seems to just fabricate the many evil consequences that are sure to follow the first cannabis inhalation. Making marijuana out to be insanity-inducing also seems a favorite pastime of officials and authorities with an interest to maintaining or increasing the harshness of marijuana laws.

A significant power of bureaucratic agencies is to use the legitimacy of office to lend credibility to disinformation

## Drug War Propaganda

designed to produce useful public hate. William Bennett is the significant modern practitioner, before him came J. Edgar Hoover and his service to the demonization of alcohol and Harry Anslinger, who most successfully of all fostered a culture of drug hate and used it to build a permanent niche in the federal government for the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. By the mid-1930s Anslinger had mastered the technique of fabricating anecdotal stories of rape, murder, mayhem and madness tied to marijuana, and presenting these as proof of the important work of his agency. "Reefer Madness" is the most famous of the many articles and stories produced or sponsored by the agency. The movie *Reefer Madness*, in fact, differs little from contemporary "crack baby" and "Jimmy" stories. Also then, as today, the agency actively worked to suppress the scientific data that routinely contradicted the bureaucratic claim of drug harm.<sup>128</sup>

A spokesman for an organization "Against Substance Abuse" lashed out against those who suggested laws jailing adults who took cannabis were unjust. Cannabis caused all means of mental aberration, the activist claimed: "Marijuana is illegal due to its negative impact. The American Psychiatric Association lists a number of harmful mental effects caused by marijuana, such as impaired judgment, sensation of slowed time, impaired motor co-ordination, memory deficit, delirium, delusions, disorientation, hallucinations, panic attacks, and paranoia. Symptoms of mania, depression and schizophrenia are worsened."<sup>129</sup>

Likewise, another activist praised laws jailing marijuana users, due to what the activist suggested were the violence-inducing properties of modern marijuana. "As for Klinger's claim that he has never seen anyone do violence under the influence of pot, perhaps he is recalling the marijuana of the 1960's and '70's, which for the most part was nothing more than wild hemp, also known as ditch weed. Ditch weed, though low in THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, was strong enough to get a smoker sufficiently high. The marijuana today is extremely potent, can be life threatening if ingested and is a leading cause of drug-related emergency room episodes throughout the nation."<sup>130</sup> The writer did not explain why "marijuana today" was more dangerous than traditional concentrated cannabis preparations such as

## Drug War Propaganda

hashish, which have been available since ancient times.

"Cannabis 'Damages Mental Health' ," wailed an headline in a British paper. The maddening situation was described: "Using cannabis can have a serious effect on mental health, warn scientists. They say it can provoke negative mood changes, induce psychosis and have a severe effect on mental illnesses. It has also been linked to an increased risk of accidents and respiratory and cardiovascular problems."<sup>131</sup> The article went on to quote legally-minded scientists: "Scientists say must these be weighed against any possible health benefits if there is to be a change in the law."<sup>132</sup>

"Research Shatters Myth That Cannabis Is Safe Drug," proclaimed another headline. The paper proceeded to delineate the deranging dangers of the drug: "FAR from being a relatively harmless 'soft' drug, cannabis can drive people temporarily insane, as well as harming the heart, lungs and immune system, scientists said yesterday . Studies showed that the drug can have serious effects on both mental and physical health."<sup>133</sup> Many tragic mental problems were said to befall "a high proportion" of hapless tokers: "regular cannabis use led to acute psychological problems in a high proportion of people. One study found that 15 percent of cannabis users identified psychotic symptoms, such as hearing voices or irrational feelings of persecution."<sup>134</sup> (The paper did not say what, precisely, might constitute an "irrational" -- as opposed to a rational -- feeling of "persecution", for citizens of countries where cannabis users are subject to arrest and jail.) The paper went on with more weedy woes revealing that,

a number of reports, reviewed . . . in the British Journal of Psychiatry, suggested that the drug could induce psychosis in people with no history of severe mental illness.

Heavy cannabis use could lead to a state resembling acute schizophrenia. In this case, the drug was thought to trigger off an underlying illness.

Cannabis was also associated with high rates of other forms of mental illness, such as adjustment disorder, and major depression.

## Drug War Propaganda

It appeared to worsen the condition of people already suffering from schizophrenia, with users experiencing more and earlier psychotic relapses.<sup>135</sup>

No mention was made how often such claimed "psychosis" occurred, although earlier the story said "a high proportion of people" contracted another ostensible marijuana madness, leading readers to assume the worst about this, too.

That the thoughts of "many users" may be revealed, another paper similarly warned of the terrible dangers to the psyche caused by use of this drug: "Cannabis is not the harmless recreational drug many users think it is but a dangerous substance that can cause paranoia, psychosis and severe anxiety and panic, psychologists warned on Thursday."<sup>136</sup>

Though the ignorant masses discount government proclamations on the evils of pot smoking, researchers ceaselessly warn of the possible dangers they might one day discover. "'Whether there is permanent cognitive impairment in heavy long-term users is not clear,' [a researcher stated.] Her research showed that the drug is still popular with the young with 60% of students having tried it. A quarter of these had tried it more than once or twice and 20% of them said they could use it once a week or more."<sup>137</sup> Severe users were discovered to be taking fantastic risks. "Severe users were found to smoke up to 15 joints a day exposing them to several hundred milligrams of cannabis every 24 hours."<sup>138</sup> (Left unsaid was how "several hundred milligrams of cannabis" -- less than one gram -- would be sufficient to provide material for "15 joints.")

A paper cried out against the many dangers of marijuana. "SCIENTISTS LIST MENTAL RISKS FROM SMOKING CANNABIS,"<sup>139</sup> shouted the headline. Notice that the propaganda technique of *testimonial*<sup>140</sup> is very useful with this theme: it is always helpful to have a recognized authority, expert or official to tell of the insanity that shall surely follow upon taking marijuana. A "Journal of Psychiatry" will do nicely for authoritative testimonial:

Cannabis smoking -- besides causing harm to heart, lungs and the immune system -- can lead to temporary bouts of mental illness.

## Drug War Propaganda

Scientists report today in the British Journal of Psychiatry that regular use may make things worse for people who have mental health problems, and lead to panic attacks and anxiety in those who do not.

Andrew Johns of the Institute of Psychiatry at the Maudsley hospital in south London surveyed a number of recent studies. One found that 15% of users identified psychotic symptoms or irrational feelings of persecution. Other reports suggested the drug could induce psychosis in people with no history of severe mental illness.

Those with mental illness -- living in the community, and as likely as anybody else to get hold of the drug -- were even more at risk. 'People with major mental illnesses such as schizophrenia are especially vulnerable, in that cannabis generally provokes relapses and aggravates existing symptoms,' Dr Johns said."<sup>141</sup>

It is notable that "psychotic symptoms or irrational feelings of persecution" were conflated. This same phrase was repeated in several of the reports of the same publicity event. This allows a quite understandable acknowledgment of legal penalties for consuming cannabis to be converted into "feelings of persecution." Furthermore, when then given the choice between "psychotic symptoms or irrational feelings of persecution," is also easy to see how a large percentage of cannabis users could be interpreted as having spoken of "persecution" simply by restating existing laws. The methodologies behind the testimonials' studies was not mentioned. Commenting on the mental state of such drug users, one student of National Socialist laws and policies in the 1930s noted:

We typically find Jewish adults, too, drawing into themselves, exhibiting despair, and developing problems in relating with people as one formerly supportive group after another (employers, insurers, landlords, police) prevented them from living normally in society. These sorts of Jewish behavior mimic the 'drug user personality,' suggesting that the behavior may be a response to persecution from society rather than an

## Drug War Propaganda

expression of someone's inherent personality -- particularly since most users of socially approved drugs such as alcohol and nicotine do not exhibit 'drug user symptoms' despite those drugs' potency and danger.<sup>142</sup>

One expert declared that marijuana use was responsible for alcoholism: ". . . director Ewen McLeod said more than 80% of Deanery clients who relapsed into alcoholism had cannabis 'somewhere in the mix'. 'Our research has shown the majority of those who revert back to alcohol are cannabis users.'"<sup>143</sup> Another writer saw the continued criminalization of marijuana (that is to say, the continued jailing of adults who take marijuana) as an essential bulwark against difficulties of contemporary adolescent life. "What I do say is that marijuana used on a regular basis creates emotional isolation, warped thinking patterns, paranoia and moral confusion. . . . the emotional upheaval caused by this mild hallucinogen can be devastating. [Teen-agers today] feel the intense pressure to conform, to produce and to 'fit in.' Add the influences and stress of modern family life and the media to the shifting values of today's morals, and a teen-ager's life can become even more intolerable if pot is in the picture."<sup>144</sup> Likewise, other parents blamed their child's destruction on cannabis: "Just a few months later, Genevieve and several friends were arrested at a rave party that had been busted . . . If she and Chuck made one mistake, she suggests, it's that they underestimated the extent of their daughter's psychological addiction to pot. . . . Pauser says she's aware some people would scoff at that notion and argue that pot is not a serious drug. . . . 'But for kids who have a chemical imbalance and are susceptible to that sort of thing, it destroys their lives.'"<sup>145</sup>

Another writer agreed, seeming to say that because children exist, adults must always be punished and jailed for using the forbidden marijuana: "Anybody who believes that cannabis is not a dangerous drug should approach organisations such as Teen Challenge or the How to Drugproof your Kids movement. Cannabis plays havoc with reproductive organs, respiratory organs and the heart. It can produce a change in personality and behaviour in heavy users. It is not a cigarette with a bigger kick; it is considerably more dangerous than that and use of this drug must never be decriminalised, much less legalised."<sup>146</sup>



## **Drug War Propaganda**

"Drug Link To Psychosis," read another headline. The paper proceeded to tell of the insidious dangers of marijuana: "More than 40 per cent of young people who suffered a severe mental disturbance used cannabis weekly, a study has found. The research, conducted by the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre and Melbourne University, also found that 18 per cent of young people seeking help for psychosis had used cannabis within the previous four weeks."<sup>147</sup> (The study did not tell what proportion of all "young people" used cannabis within that same time period.) The name of the study itself, "The Cannabis and Psychosis Project," neatly plays upon the theme of this chapter. (The name of the conference where the study was presented, "the International Conference on Drugs and Young People" plays upon yet another common prohibition propaganda theme.) The story went on to tell of the alarming results: "Project coordinator Kathryn Elkins said the study charted the progress of 193 young people aged between 15 and 29 after their first psychotic episode. Ms Elkins said cannabis was the most abused drug among the group with more than 50 per cent unable to quit using the drug, even after serious psychotic episodes."<sup>148</sup> In a touching detail, we learn the project coordinator is concerned more about the horrible addictive effects of pot on the kids, than the increased risks of child suicides: "Ms Elkins said some quit when they realised that cannabis contributed to their depression and increased the risk of suicide. 'However, our concern was that many young people were unable to quit,' she said."<sup>149</sup>

Other researchers are more cautious in their assessment of the psychosis-inducing abilities of marijuana: "Cannabis use has often been cited as an implicated etiological or aggravating factor in the development of psychosis (schizophrenia). A recent study found otherwise (Warner et al., 1994). Among the findings, psychotic patients who used marijuana had lower hospitalization rates than those who abused other substances, and they had lower rates of activation symptoms. Patients reported beneficial effects on depression, anxiety, insomnia, and pain."<sup>150</sup> Such observations, however, don't make for the exciting reading of the "Marijuana Causes Schizophrenia" headlines.

### **Pot Problems**

A common line of reasoning is to assert that because of 'all the

## Drug War Propaganda

problems with alcohol and tobacco, *we* shouldn't consider legalizing marijuana.' Such an assertion presupposes much. The assertion assumes that cannabis is not currently taken by anyone and that the question posed is whether or not people should or should not take it. The assertion euphemizes away unpleasant thoughts of jail, converting this to "legalize", instead. The assertion assumes that those opposed to the jailing of adults for the taking of cannabis must also answer for all misery attributed to alcohol and tobacco. For example, a paper reported one city "opposed" changing marijuana laws, presumably unless they were made more harsh. "Troy Opposes Easing Pot Law," read the story headline. "After the string of successes by pot proponents, law-and-order proponents vow to stop the movement from gaining root in Michigan. 'A good offense is the best defense,' said Maryann Solberg, executive director of the Troy Community Coalition."<sup>151</sup> The reasoning proffered for continued jailing of adults who took cannabis? "We are about community health. Legalizing marijuana does not enhance community health. We have enough problems with legal drugs -- alcohol and tobacco -- without adding another."<sup>152</sup> Ms Solberg did not explain how jailing adults for the act of taking cannabis enhanced community health. Neither were prison-contracted tuberculosis, AIDS or prison rapes mentioned.

A California paper expressed the cannabis concerns of officials. Forgetting marijuana is grown in parks because of prohibition, authorities tried out the 'ecological ruin' angle, bemoaning the ruinous devastation visited upon pristine nature: "Forest Service officials worry that the pot patches are affecting wildlife in national forests, as growers kill animals for food, cut away natural vegetation, litter and leave human waste lying about. 'Birds and animals are dying because of the pesticides they use,' complained Kathy Good, a Forest Service spokeswoman. 'They're also a big fire hazard because they use stoves and campfires unsafely.'"<sup>153</sup>

An editor, irked at a challenge to a local district attorney over the issue of medical marijuana arrests, lashed out at those who at taken this action, calling such persons "too lazy to succeed at anything." The provision in the State's legal code followed by the "lazy" ones was described as "extortion" and "extort[ing] law enforcement officials" which would "giv[e] growers and dealers a free pass" allowing them to

## **Drug War Propaganda**

"cultivate and smoke marijuana unfettered" and "would institute, as a matter of law, reefer madness."<sup>154</sup>

Likewise, the head of a concerned parent group agreed: "But Sue Rusche, executive director of National Families in Action, called marijuana an 'unsafe and untested drug.' The group says supporters of medical marijuana use are trying to pave the way for legalization of pot and other drugs."<sup>155</sup> Skipping unpleasant details concerning jail, the parent group leader implied that decisions concerning incarceration should rest with the FDA, as opposed to voters: "This is an unapproved, unsafe, ineffective drug. And until the FDA finds out otherwise, it should not be available for anybody."<sup>156</sup> Another writer mocked the idea cannabis users not be jailed: "We must not worry about the loss of jobs in the law-enforcement area, if marijuana were legal. The jobs will be more than made up in the medical and substance-abuse counseling fields. What's a few more health statistics? After all, aren't people cutting down on cigarette smoking? Those health risks have to be made up from somewhere don't they?"<sup>157</sup>

### **Meth Crime/Illness**

#### **Methamphetamine Madness**

Contemporary press accounts of methamphetamine use recount the horrors of this substance. "How Meth Hurts A Body" read one headline. The article detailed the ravages of meth: "The small capillaries that feed blood to the teeth and certain other parts of the body are narrowed with heavy meth use, Sem said. This reduces the blood supply to the teeth causing them to fall out or quickly decay. Other negative effects of long-term use of the drug are lung disorders, brain and liver damage, kidney damage, blood clots, and damage to the blood vessels and the brain. Long-term users may also appear aged beyond their years."<sup>158</sup> Meth's mental harms are depicted as devastating, also: "Psychological damage such as paranoia, aggressive behavior, anger, chronic depression, and hallucinations have also been associated with use of the drug. Initial symptoms associated with the use of methamphetamine are quick and substantial weight loss, mood swings, lack of sleep, an uncommon amount of energy, and a sense of euphoria."<sup>159</sup>

Another paper, quoting a state medical examiner, revealed

## Drug War Propaganda

methamphetamines is everywhere: "the drug [meth] disrupts households, contributes to the crime rate and puts pressure on social services trying to deal with neglected children, for example. 'We're just seeing the numbers of deaths catch up with what we already know from police and social service agencies: that meth is pervasive in society,' [the examiner] said."<sup>160</sup> One paper recounted the effects of meth: "A drug abuser should know the damaging effects, the consequences, of what they are using," said Dr. Nora Volkow . . . 'This is a significant amount of damage.' The changes, as documented by brain scans, are greater than those that have been seen with heroin, alcohol or cocaine, she said."<sup>161</sup>

Another newspaper article, soberly slugged: "Meth, An Insidious Menace," reported of the situation. "'The gang members are also using methamphetamine and as a result are becoming increasingly paranoid,' the report said. 'This is causing warring over distribution markets.'"<sup>162</sup> The report went on to repeatedly stress the violence expected to happen: "'Inter-gang violence will probably increase in keeping with the expansion of the methamphetamine market.' Acting national crime manager Detective Inspector Harry Quinn said the high level of violence associated with the drug would undoubtedly have an impact on society. 'Methamphetamine is one of the most insidious drugs we have seen in the last decade and a half,' he said. 'The level of violence that surrounds people who are meth addicts or who are coming off after a long time or have a heavy drug use is incredibly high.'"<sup>163</sup>

A New York Times report ("Drug's Effect On Brain Is Extensive, Study Finds") was an extended testimonial concerning the brain-rotting actions of meth. "Heavy users of methamphetamine -- a highly addictive stimulant that can be made at home in the kitchen sink -- are doing more damage to their brains than scientists had thought, according to the first study that looked inside addicts' brains nearly a year after they stopped using the drug. At least a quarter of a class of molecules that help people feel pleasure and reward were knocked out by methamphetamine, the study found. Some of the addicts' brains resembled those of people with early and mild Parkinson's disease. But the biggest surprise is that another brain region responsible for spatial perception and sensation, which has never before been linked to methamphetamine abuse, was hyperactive and showed signs of

## Drug War Propaganda

scarring."<sup>164</sup>

A Singapore paper reported on Thailand's Orwellian re-naming of meth, and the hopes the new name might be less appealing. (The previous re-naming, 'crazy pill', apparently having backfired.) "To make it seem less trendy, 'ya ba' the 'madness pill' is to be known as 'ya ngo' or 'stupid pill'. This is its second name change in five years. . . . Having failed to stem the tide of methamphetamine abuse, the Thai authorities are trying to make the drug 'less cool' among youngsters by calling it 'ya ngo', or the 'stupid pill' - the second name change in five years."<sup>165</sup>

In one editorial, "Meth is 'Pure Poison' ," the writer punched this familiar theme repeatedly: "By now, it should be clear: methamphetamine is 'pure poison,' as one Covington County law enforcement officer recently stated. Many users of meth may get into the drug unaware the drug is indeed, pure poison."<sup>166</sup> Referring to drugs as "poison" is perhaps the epitome of this prohibition propaganda theme, the theme of associating drugs and problems like crime and illness. (Concerning the identification of drugs as "poison", one student of drug policy noted that "'frequent references to poisons' has remained a constant feature of the imagery and rhetoric of scapegoating."<sup>167</sup>) The editorial continued, painting a noxious picture of the contents of illicit methamphetamines: "Specific recipes vary but include some, if not all, of the following ingredients: alcohol, ether, Benzene, paint thinner, freon, acetone, chloroform, camp stove fuel, starting fluid, anhydrous ammonia, white gasoline, black iodine, lye, Drano, sulfuric acid, Epsom salts, wooden matches, cold tablets and bronchodilators."<sup>168</sup> The report did not say what types of toxic materials are used in the manufacture of other substances, like aspirin or toothpaste. The editorial described the frightful effects of meth: "Symptoms of prolonged abuse of the highly addictive drug include loss of hair, loss of body mass, body sores, deteriorating teeth -- and those are just some of the physical effects of meth abuse. On the psychological side, meth abusers often experience psychotic episodes that can turn violent, hallucinations brought on by loss of sleep, feelings of extreme paranoia and other delusions."<sup>169</sup> Other reports agree: "'The other thing that makes it particularly devastating is that long-term users will start to develop extreme symptoms of paranoia and psychoses. Someone can develop a mental illness that does not go away once they quit using the drug."<sup>170</sup> "There

## **Drug War Propaganda**

is no such thing as a safe dose of meth."<sup>171</sup> (This will be important information for the parents of children prescribed amphetamines for their attention-deficit and hyperactive children.) "It extracts a physical, mental and emotional toll. It is a recipe for violence, with extreme paranoia as one of its side-effects."<sup>172</sup>

Reports relayed from officials emphasize the noxious and harmful chemicals that may contaminate bootleg meth operations, and the drug itself: "Many chemicals used in a meth lab are toxic, sheriff's spokeswoman Jan Jorgensen said. They can cause cancer, liver failure, brain damage, heart failure, central nervous system failure, kidney failure, erratic behavior, birth defects, violence and death in humans, Jorgensen said. In addition, the chemicals contaminate buildings, plumbing and septic systems, furniture, clothes, rugs, floors and walls, and the environment -- ground water, wells and air, she said."<sup>173</sup> Such reports do not explain why amphetamines given to children for psychiatric disorders are acceptable if they are this dangerous; neither do these reports explain why clandestine drug manufacturing, like bootleg liquor distillation, frequently introduces toxic contaminants, while pharmaceutical amphetamines and commercially-made liquor are not so contaminated.

### **Meth Lab Land Mines**

The methamphetamine laboratory is said to be a generator of all type of toxic chemicals. Because meth-making generates these toxic fumes, smells and by-products, the meth makers use typically use abandoned buildings or rural areas to practice their craft. "The high desert community, where neighbors live far apart, was ideal for meth labs, which emit a vile mix of fecal and ether odors."<sup>174</sup> Meth labs "represent a litany of personal and environmental hazards that can cause serious illness or injury to manufacturers, children, and innocent victims alike,"<sup>175</sup> another report agreed.

Another paper revealed police-supplied details about a new meth lab threat: labs on wheels. "'We have seen moving mobile meth labs. We've noticed most have the ability to work, but are missing one link before becoming a full-blown lab,' [police] said. 'There is a concern for the individual in the vehicle and other motoring public.'"<sup>176</sup> Meth labs are

## Drug War Propaganda

described as virtual land mines: "Authorities must be cautious when dealing with labs. Chemical bottles may not have labels and be unidentifiable. The wrong mix can be explosive. Producers may booby-trap the area around their labs."<sup>177</sup>

Police in one area described roving packs of larcenous laboratory operators: Quoting authorities, one paper reported that "anhydrous [ammonia] thieves typically travel in groups. Those that use meth are often highly paranoid-schizophrenic, have very sophisticated schemes, are most dangerous when coming down from a drug-induced 'high' and may be willing do anything to get what they want, he said."<sup>178</sup> Anhydrous ammonia is commonly used by farmers for fertilizer; meth makers use it to make methamphetamine "The materials can be dangerous, so they shouldn't be touched or even smelled. And if you see someone trying to steal anhydrous ammonia, it's not worth trying to stop them" because "the people who are paranoid that use methamphetamine because it is a central-nervous-system stimulant that affects people in so many different ways . . . You cannot actually give an exact term of what a (meth user) will do at that time because they are so different and the hazards they have with them can be very harmful to farmers."<sup>179</sup> The paper apparently did not see fit to ask the same officials why similar problems were not encountered for amphetamines prescribed to school children in the same locale.

Whipped up by breathless reports of the dangers of meth and the associated contamination, politicians stand ever ready to pass more laws. "The legislation also could allow tougher penalties for another dangerous trend in meth production . . . Because the labs are so volatile, drug makers can create hazards for many people in parks, apartment buildings and near schools," one Ohio politician proclaimed.<sup>180</sup> Another paper explained that officials, authorities and experts were developing strategies to deal with the "ravages" this "destructive drug" brings: "The depth of the methamphetamine problem in the Central Valley was well-chronicled in a special 18-page section by reporters from the Fresno, Modesto and Sacramento Bee newspapers in October. That prompted the Central Valley Methamphetamine Summit in January, which brought together elected officials and law-enforcement agencies to develop strategies to combat the social, environmental and individual ravages that the destructive drug cultivates."<sup>181</sup> Neither did this report

## **Drug War Propaganda**

speculate why children are prescribed amphetamines in the same areas as the "ravages" of this "destructive drug." Not to be outdone, a California report told readers that marijuana farms were now funded with proceeds from methamphetamines labs.<sup>182</sup>

### **Dance Drug Danger**

In the classic pattern, the so-called "dance drugs": primarily ecstasy (MDMA) and GHB, are associated with many problems in contemporary prohibitionist writings. The dance drugs are most often linked with illness and death from their consumption. Infrequently press accounts accent crime associated with dealing in large quantities. MDMA has hallucinogenic (and stimulant) effects. As for other forbidden drugs, "the hallucinogens continued to be defined as evil -- physically, emotionally, and morally devastating to the individual and unquestionably destructive to the culture."<sup>183</sup>

One article entitled "The Ecstasy Generation," told of drugged dancers dropping dead: "In the past decade dozens of deaths have been connected to Ecstasy use. Some of those victims have simply expired on the dance floor from dehydration and overheating while on the drug. Others have been poisoned from pills sold as Ecstasy but containing MDMA substitutes such as PMA. But since deaths have been limited and dangers of MDMA are largely unknown its reputation as a wonder drug is growing."<sup>184</sup> Reports stress deaths associated with dance drugs, though they are admittedly rare. "The so-called 'designer drug' that may have contributed to the death of an 18-year-old Athens Tech student last weekend is nothing new in town, and rarely is it fatal. [a man] died early Saturday at St. Mary's Hospital after going into seizures at an Athens nightclub. Friends told police [he] ingested a lethal cocktail of speed, alcohol and Ecstasy, which he allegedly bought from another patron at [a] bar."<sup>185</sup>

One paper listed the many harms associated with MDMA. Speculating the harms may be permanent, the paper bolstered this with testimony from the DEA: "Ecstasy use can have irreversible consequences. . . . chronic use of . . . MDMA, damages the brain cells that release serotonin . . . 'Ecstasy could exacerbate . . . mental illness or major depression' . . . How long MDMA-induced brain damage persists and



## Drug War Propaganda

the long-term consequences of that damage are still in question . . . animal studies, which first documented the neurotoxic effects . . . loss of serotonin neurons in humans may last for many years and possibly be permanent, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration."<sup>186</sup> The article did not neglect to mention acute harms linked to this drug: "effects include overheating and dehydration. . . . many suffer from heatstroke. . . . over 100 people across the nation have died taking Ecstasy at raves."<sup>187</sup>

Another piece, representative of much alarming MDMA reporting, was calmly headlined: "Rising Alarm About Use Of Ecstasy By Teenagers."<sup>188</sup> The story largely reproduced an official mailing sent out by one local government "to 640,000 households with teenagers, warning, 'More and more of our youth are possessing the drug, taking the drug, selling the drug and either getting sick or being arrested'." The report magnified the mailing's message, repeating the authorities' warning of the dire situation: "Prosecutions involving Ecstasy have increased sharply, said District Attorney Jeanine Pirro, rising to 80 last year from virtually none in 1998. Since 1999, the police have seized more than 25,000 tablets worth more than \$500,000. 'It's disturbing because unlike heroin or cocaine, a lot of the customer base is between 16 and 25,' Ms. Pirro said. 'Somehow this drug has been sensationalized where young people think, 'Oh, this is something I should try,' without realizing this is not only a serious crime but a serious drug.' Ms. Pirro said that in the county, the police have seen Ecstasy users becoming suppliers. 'What young people need to realize is that you can face up to seven years in prison for selling one pill,' she said."<sup>189</sup> (Note the continual emphasis on "young people", another favorite prohibitionist propaganda theme frequently combined with the "drugs cause crime and illness" theme of this chapter.)

One article, titled "The 'Hug Drug' Danger," told of the brain injury that is said to follow MDMA usage: "What the young users don't understand is that ecstasy can cause brain damage."<sup>190</sup> Presenting testimonial of a "recent federal study" it was said that "chronic use of MDMA harms neurons that regulate memory."<sup>191</sup> The story proceeded to tell of the deadly dangers of MDMA: "And ecstasy can kill. More than 100 have died after taking the drug at rave parties from heat stroke. . . . it causes body temperature to rise. A 16-year-old Denver girl died in February

## Drug War Propaganda

after [consuming MDMA]. Suddenly dehydrated, she drank three gallons of water. The resulting sodium depletion triggered swelling of the brain that put her into a coma. . . . get the word out to parents to be wary about the dangers of ecstasy."<sup>192</sup>

A British paper, citing "research" told also of the mental agonies of ecstasy in an article headlined "Regular Ecstasy Users Risking Loss Of Memory." The mental MDMA wasteland was described, users were "inflicting so much damage to their memory they frequently forget simple tasks and routinely lose their train of thought while talking." Additionally users (according to the *testimonial*) "suffer significant impairment to all aspects of their everyday memory . . . damage to the frontal and pre-frontal cortex of the brain."<sup>193</sup> Mentioning the threat to the children, another prohibition theme and testimonial was included in the article: "If the explanation lies in biology, Dr Heffernan said, it could have particularly worrying consequences for young ecstasy users. 'There is some evidence that the frontal cortex is still developing in teenagers and adolescents,' he said. 'If your brain is still developing in parts, there is a strong possibility you could be seriously damaging this development with ecstasy use.'"<sup>194</sup>

A cleverly headlined piece, "Forget Ecstasy, Says Cop," was able to recycle an earlier mentioned British report for additional mileage. "One of B.C.'s top drug cops is praising a British study that found young people who use the party drug ecstasy risk long-term brain damage. A team of psychologists told the British Psychological Society conference in Glasgow, Scotland, yesterday that regular users may damage the part of their brains that allows people to remember what they have to do next. The study of 40 adults who took ecstasy at least 10 times a month found they had poorer memories than 39 adults who didn't take the drug."<sup>195</sup> Omitting both conflicting research and opinion, the report went on to give space to official pronouncements on how helpful such studies are to bolster accounts of the harms of MDMA: "The results, said Vancouver RCMP Cpl. Scott Rintoul, is further ammunition for those who are trying to convince young people that ecstasy is not the harmless party drug that is claimed by some members of the Rave set. 'This is very timely,' said Rintoul. 'It is indicating more and more that this is not a benign drug.'"<sup>196</sup> Not surprisingly, the paper repeated admonitions against lessening the harshness of drug laws, shifting from

## **Drug War Propaganda**

MDMA to "soft drugs" (meaning cannabis): ". . . 'There is a belief that soft drugs should be legalized when in fact, research suggests that regular use can have a very damaging effect on your cognitive health.'"<sup>197</sup>

Another article ("Drug Doubly Dangerous"), likewise giving space to official testimonial, told of the deaths attributed to GHB and denounced the Internet: "Porrata has a database of 175 suspected GHB-related deaths in recent years. The [DEA] has confirmed 71 of those, she said, but lacks the manpower to go farther. . . 'There is this huge aura of innocence and safety based on bullcrap and lies on the Internet,' she said. 'I consider it (GHB) the most dangerous drug I have encountered in my 25 years in law enforcement.'"<sup>198</sup> A paper's space given to the testimony of government officials similarly relayed official warnings. "Boulder police Cmdr. Joe Pelle said users have suffered physical problems because of Ecstasy, not just as a result of tainted byproducts. Ecstasy is also unpredictable, Boulder County Sheriff George Epp said. 'That's the reason it was outlawed as a prescription drug.'"<sup>199</sup>

The parents of a college student said to have been killed by MDMA were yet able to make a media-savvy move: they had pictures taken of their daughter while in a coma, before expiring. "Parents who asked for a photograph of their daughter's corpse to be released as a warning about the dangers of the drug ecstasy were yesterday praised for their bravery. . . . Police said they agreed to arrange the photograph at the request of [the student's] parents [who] were at her bedside when she died . . . hoped the horror of the picture would serve as a warning. . . . We hope that it will portray the full horror of what drugs can do."<sup>200</sup> Left unexplained was why similar (though much more numerous) photos of ordinary traffic accident victims should not serve an even more urgent goal.

### **Dance Drug Crime and Violence**

While dance drugs are not as frequently linked to violence and crime as other forbidden drugs, reports do surface of this nature. Officials and authorities like to emphasize the unknown. "But law enforcement officials aren't taking any chances. 'It could be worse than cocaine. We just don't know,' says Christopher Giovino, head of the DEA's Long

## Drug War Propaganda

Island, N.Y., district office. Giovino worries that the DEA, until now consumed by cracking down on methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin traffic, may have missed crucial early signs."<sup>201</sup> Still, experts concede, there is little violence with ecstasy: "So far, unlike heroin and crack cocaine, there's no evidence that ecstasy is addictive or so expensive that it prompts violent crimes by users desperate for money to buy more."<sup>202</sup>

A Canadian paper reported the problems of crime and illness, problems linked to dance drugs, were reason enough to "Slam Door" on certain types of music, apparently, if played publicly: "Surrey RCMP superintendent . . . says raves, and the drugs that go with them, have no business in this city. 'My position is that we know at raves the drugs are consumed in great quantities,' says MacIntyre. 'I don't support having raves in this city.' . . . 'There we saw many other issues,' MacIntyre says, including tired kids driving their cars into ditches, overdoses . . ."<sup>203</sup>

Another report ridiculed mild-mannered effects of MDMA on people, linking all manner of violence to it: "Although Ecstasy is touted as a peace-love drug, police wiretap summaries link a number of the suspects in violent acts."<sup>204</sup> the paper listed the "violent acts" that police did "link" to the drug: due to the MDMA trade, a valet "had been asphyxiated." The paper reported that A suspect had "a gun on his lap before a suspected drug deal. [officials say they found] three pistols in [his] apartment . . ." Later a phone tap recorded one suspect asking another (over a \$4000 drug debt), "Should I give him a [beating] still?" The report finished with an ominous threat culled from the phone taps: "If she talked, he warned, she 'will be found missing ... floating.'"<sup>205</sup> The report chose not to draw comparisons with the similar effects seen on criminality and gangsterism, during the prohibition of alcohol.

### Opioid and Opiate, Crime and Illness

*Opiates* (opium-derived drugs like codeine, morphine and heroin), and *Opioids* (similar opiate-like drugs, that are not strictly speaking, derived from opium, like OxyContin), are said to be terrible scourges upon humanity,<sup>206</sup> an insidious evil that produces untold waves of crime. "For example, this heroin and OxyContin problem we're seeing. A lot of people addicted to this stuff are stealing and writing bad checks to get

## Drug War Propaganda

the money they need to buy the drugs."<sup>207</sup> In an article entitled, "Deaths From OxyContin Overdoses On The Rise," a rural prosecutor stated that most crimes were due to addiction to this prescription opioid drug: "Crime rates have soared in the coalfields as addicts lie to doctors, forge prescriptions, write bad checks, burglarize homes and rob drug stores to support their \$500-a-day habits. In Tazewell County, Commonwealth's Attorney Dennis Lee estimates that OxyContin is behind 60 to 70 percent of all crimes."<sup>208</sup> As always, when black market deals go wrong, traffickers cannot go to civil court to settle the dispute. "Dodging Heroin's Bullet . . . It wasn't the first time Irene had held a gun to someone's head. But this time was different. The man trembling at the barrel's end was a friend about to die because of a \$40 drug debt."<sup>209</sup>

Another paper gave space to government officials, to tell of the dangers of this deadly curse: "'This drug can be the angel of life when used appropriately,' said Mark Earley, attorney general of Virginia, where OxyContin abuse has led to at least 32 overdose deaths. 'When used illegally it can be an angel of death.' OxyContin, a synthetic morphine . . . a popular illicit drug in some parts of the country. . . . an effect similar to that of heroin, officials said."<sup>210</sup> Echoing authorities, the article went on to tell of the crime and death "linked" to the narcotic: "Many users seek extra portions from doctors and pharmacists, but others simply break into drug stores or steal doctors' prescription pads to forge prescriptions. Maryland Attorney General Joseph Curran Jr. said the abuse of the prescription drug is becoming a national problem, spreading from western Virginia and other parts of the Appalachian Mountains. More than 120 overdose deaths nationwide have been linked to OxyContin."<sup>211</sup> Number of deaths due to other substances or activities were not given for comparison. Neither was any contrary opinion sought out to balance that of government officials. This is perhaps indicated in situations when opposing viewpoints could confuse readers.

A paper related the circumstances of a theft: "Had they been taken in a household burglary, Gary could have reported them stolen and set in train the process that might lead to the arrest of the burglar. But he couldn't bring himself to do that; he knew the person stealing the family's property and selling or hocking it. The thief was his heroin-

## **Drug War Propaganda**

addicted teenage son."<sup>212</sup> A mother's painful question is repeated in another paper: "She has learned to deal with her son's addiction and its impact on her and the rest of her family. But she does have a question: 'Why are our kids killing themselves for a few minutes of being high?'"<sup>213</sup> When emphasizing the crime and sickness that can follow addiction to such drugs, it is perhaps better to leave out questions about harms caused by prohibition (unknown purity, contamination, AIDS from needle-sharing, prohibition-inflated prices, etc.), as opposed to harms caused by the drugs themselves. Neither should the Netherlands experience of successfully reducing heroin usage be mentioned.

A supposed shortage of heroin in certain areas caused officials to predict waves of heroin-inspired problems. "Plummeting worldwide heroin production could send drug prices sky-high," one paper said, quoting officials. The shortage would "cause local junkies to commit more crime so they can support their costly habit, say Calgary cops."<sup>214</sup> "Rising Cost Of Heroin Could Spell Crime," shouted another paper's headline, similarly offering testimony of authority: "Heroin prices could shoot up due to reduced production and either put junkies on the road to recovery or force them to commit more crime to feed the habit, Alberta cops predict."<sup>215</sup> Later, a supposed glut of heroin in certain areas caused officials to predict waves of heroin-inspired problems. "The national heroin drought appears to be breaking, creating fears for health agencies that the big decline in fatal overdoses might be at an end."<sup>216</sup>

### **Crime in Colombia**

Modern prohibitionist propaganda is replete with examples linking all types of violence and violent crime with Colombia: "[N]arco-terrorism has fanned the flames of civil war in Colombia, devastating that nation's legitimate economy and threatening to suck the United States into what some critics predict could become another Vietnam."<sup>217</sup> "It should be clearly understood that drug trafficking is at the forefront of all of Colombia's armed conflicts. Drug economics know no ideology. Drug trafficking needs destabilization and chaos to operate. For this reason, peace requires breaking the spine of the drug bank for the illegitimate armed enterprises before it breaks Colombia."<sup>218</sup> "These guys [a paramilitary army] were their armed protection. This is the dynamic that has changed here over the past 10 years,' the official said. 'But it's the

## **Drug War Propaganda**

rest I can't swallow. I think they both [communist guerrillas and paramilitary units] need the drug money. The profit margin is incredible."<sup>219</sup>

Colombian cartels and kingpins are portrayed as wealthy barons who are exceedingly violent. One paper complained readers were not sufficiently mindful of the violence of Colombian drug criminals: "Pablo Escobar [did readers forget] the bombs he set off in Colombia, in shopping malls and on airplanes; or the judges, politicians, journalists and police officers he murdered in cold blood; or the thousands of widows and orphans he and his cohorts created. I was kidnapped at gunpoint by Escobar's henchmen and barely escaped with my life. In fact, there are very few Colombians whose lives remain untouched by the violence generated by drug-trafficking in our country."<sup>220</sup> Joked a US comedian on national television, punching the link yet again: "Miss Colombia, she swallowed 50 balloons full of heroin."<sup>221</sup>

The violence and crime associated with Colombia, cocaine trafficking, the guerrilla armies, death squads, paramilitary units, and national army is given a great deal of play in the press; only a few representative samples were given here. Media accounts are full of news items linking drugs, violence, and crime to Colombia (which is to say, Colombians); politicians merely need to allude to a "regional response" to this "devastation." "Coupled with a better plan for addressing the demand side of the drug problem, a regional response will reduce drug traffic and the devastation it causes. Furthermore, our plan is bolstered by the conviction of many in Congress that we are doing what is right for America," cried one politician.<sup>222</sup>

### **Giving Addicts the Treatment**

In the propaganda of prohibition, it is common to claim those who use currently forbidden drugs are ill, criminal, or both. In any event, such discussion strengthens associations between drug and problematic behavior. The goals of painting such links are varied and include justification for continued and increased funding for prison/treatment industries, accretion of additional powers by officials and authorities. When the problem is too much autonomy in the lives of citizens,

## Drug War Propaganda

government treatment experts, police and prosecutors readily suggest the solution is more coercion in the form of treatment and jail.

### sick criminals

What do "the experts" tell us, and what are the "givens"? One paper sets the scene. "Given that substance abuse and addiction play such a prominent role in American society's biggest problems, from domestic violence to school dropout rates to AIDS," the paper asked, "what do the experts say we should do?"<sup>223</sup> Beyond question, we are assured, "substance abuse and addiction" is to blame for "domestic violence to school dropout rates to AIDS." Needless to say, repeal of prohibition was not discussed by the paper's "experts."

However, it *is* helpful to discuss and stress problems of "addiction." Images are painted of heroin and cocaine addicts, but what is meant is any use of any amount of any forbidden drug. Discussing the questions concerning whether drug users are ill requiring coerced treatment, or are criminals deserving of incarceration, drives home the point that additional government power is needed because drug users are either sick or criminal. "At this point in the discussion, the philosophical question, 'Is addiction an illness or a crime?' tends to rear its ugly head. After a lifetime of observing addiction, I've come to the conclusion it's both. It's an illness that, more often than not, leads to the addict committing criminal behavior; whether that criminal behavior is driving drunk or stealing for dope is neither here nor there."<sup>224</sup> Newsweek magazine agreed; drug users are diseased, or criminals or both: "DISEASE OR CRIME? In an attempt to break the vicious cycle, drug addiction is increasingly being viewed more as a disease than a crime. (Drug trafficking is a different matter.) California approved Proposition 36 last fall, a landmark referendum that offers treatment options in place of jail for nonviolent offenders."<sup>225</sup>

Singing in harmony with government officials, the article went on to identify, attack and dismiss "legalizers": more government force is needed, say government experts, officials and authorities: "policy revolutions -- like legalizing narcotics or somehow eradicating supply -- are pipe dreams." Why? Because "drug-treatment experts now often favor the 'big foot' of law enforcement. The legalizers don't understand



## Drug War Propaganda

the psychodynamics of addiction,' says [a government expert] 'The nature of the disorder is that the client is resistant to treatment.' This suggests the need for intensive drug treatment not only in jail, where addicts are a captive audience, but after release, with sentences shortened in exchange for successful enrollment. Drug-court judges use carrots (gift certificates; the promise of fewer court dates) and sticks (return to jail) to change behavior."<sup>226</sup>

The question "treatment or jail?" (which carries the insinuation: "drug users are sick and/or criminal") is pondered by news media and pundits again and again. "Connecticut is ready to join a national trend of sending nonviolent, drug-dependent convicts into community and treatment programs instead of prisons."<sup>227</sup> "Do drug addicts like Robert Downey, Jr. belong in a hospital or in prison?" asked the host of a national news program.<sup>228</sup> Rarely discussed (unless to dismiss) is the option of repealing selected prohibitions; the option of restoring freedoms that all adults once retained. That would be confusing and not "on message"; better to rhetorically ask if drug users are sick, criminal or both.

### the sick and the dead

One reporter painted a squalid picture of addiction in one area. "A Problem Too Big To Ignore," cried the story's headline. "You can ignore the drug problem in downtown Vancouver, but you have to stay away from downtown. . . . as you wait at the curb to pick up someone, you see a woman lying against the building, her head back, her mouth open, a needle dangling out of her arm. She looks dead but, somehow, you know not to get alarmed."<sup>229</sup> Because of the many problems we are assured are *linked to* forbidden drugs, more laws allowing government to help the drug user with forced treatment and jail are indicated, say government officials. "An addict whose partner died recently of a drug overdose pleaded with a judge Friday for help in kicking her habit. . . . she was convicted of 22 offenses that included a string of thefts from Sault Ste. Marie stores. The 30-year-old woman told Ontario Court Justice Wayne Cohen she lost her spouse to narcotics two weeks ago. 'He died of a drug overdose and I don't want that to happen me,' the weeping woman said."<sup>230</sup> The article did not mention accidental overdoses are frequently a result of black market factors like unknown

## Drug War Propaganda

drug potencies; in other words, problems caused by prohibition itself. Nonetheless, veteran drug experts agree government must always do more; costs spent by government to cure the problem one year, are the next year counted as a drain on state resources which can only indicate yet more resources need be applied. Joseph Califano: "Substance abuse and addiction is the elephant in the living room of state government, creating havoc with service systems, causing illness, injury and death and consuming increasing amounts of state resources."<sup>231</sup>

Another article hailed the communist Chinese government's response to drug users. "China is . . . locking up users, some of them under 18, in mental hospitals. . . . The official number of addicts is 860,000 in a population of 1.2 billion. . . . Many wind up in mental hospitals and are left there until a . . . bribe is paid."<sup>232</sup> "A Year Of Helping People," read another article's headline. And just how were people helped? By forced treatment. "The New River Valley's only residential substance abuse treatment center marks its first anniversary this week. . . . Clients get four days to talk crazy and insult the staff at the New Life Recovery Center. Then Kat McClinton has 26 days to work a miracle."<sup>233</sup> Drug "addicts" (marijuana users) are crazy and insulting; the propaganda theme that drugs make people crazy criminals is strengthened, not questioned.

"Addiction", experts declare, has a terrible cost to society. "When immunologist Philippe Pouletty was a resident at a hospital emergency room in Paris in the early 1980s, he was struck by the fact that, although 20% of patients admitted were drunks or drug addicts, doctors had no adequate treatment for them. Occasionally he would quiz drug industry executives on the problem: 'Tell me which disease has 30 million chronic patients worldwide and costs 1% to 3% of the U.S. gross national product.' 'No one guessed addiction,' Pouletty says."<sup>234</sup> Prohibited drugs are conflated with alcohol to pump up the ostensible costs of illegal drugs as a tacit argument to bolster prohibition; the cost of maintaining prohibition is not mentioned.

Another writer repeated the familiar chant that "Addiction is a disease" as justification for punishing the diseased. Yet not punishment "alone" for this "disease", this "disease" requires other treatment, also: "We need to make an example of [a drug user]. An example of what a

## **Drug War Propaganda**

devastating disease addiction is. We need to make people understand that 'offenders' are not purposely ruining their lives and those of their families. If punishment alone could stop addiction, our country would have been free of this scourge a long time ago. It takes treatment and rehab, as many times as necessary -- for few are able to stay clean after one or maybe even several efforts."<sup>235</sup> The writer did not mention why tobacco addicts and alcohol addicts did not deserve punishment for eschewing abstinence.

Others have observed that what police, politicians and experts claim is "addiction to narcotics" requiring forced "treatment" appears to be aimed at cannabis users. In an article slugged, "Marijuana Still Drug Of Choice," one paper admitted that (presumably coerced) treatment of cannabis users is the real growth industry. "The Olathe Police Department reported a 19 percent decrease in the number of drug cases . . . 'What we're seeing the most in Olathe is marijuana usage' . . . [the] director of substance abuse services for Johnson County Mental Health, said marijuana usage is a common problem throughout the county. 'What we're seeing in our youth treatment program is that alcohol and marijuana are the drugs of choice,' she said."<sup>236</sup> No distinction was made between use and abuse.

### **criminal addicts**

Many crimes may be blamed on the addict. Prosecutors argue drugs users deserve tougher punishment, because even if a given drug user isn't caught red-handed, there are "probably all kinds" of other crimes the drug user committed. "'These charges are the tip of the iceberg.' 'There are probably all kinds of offenses she committed to feed her habit,' Gualazzi said, adding each time the woman had been caught she had stolen items from other stores as well."<sup>237</sup> Another paper complained the act of selling forbidden drugs is a violent act, and that drug sellers were not treated harshly enough in that locale: "parole regulations are inadequate if large-scale, organized drug trafficking is not considered a violent offense. 'The parole board should remember that drug traffickers are merchants of death' . . . 'I think that Parliament should change that concept because drug trafficking should be considered a dangerous offense. People don't realize, or don't want to realize, that behind the drugs there are many stories of addiction and

## Drug War Propaganda

death."<sup>238</sup> The historical successes of similar prohibition penalties are probably better left unmentioned in such articles.

Quoting a politician one paper claimed that jailing drug users was to protect against the "epidemic" of "violence" associated with cocaine: "Policymakers over the past decade had strongly emphasized incarceration because of the introduction of crack-cocaine and the violence that came with it. 'Much of the effects of the past 10 years was in response to an epidemic,' Rayford said. And, at the time, the best solution seemed to be to build more prisons and create new laws to lock up drug offenders."<sup>239</sup> Not mentioned was a similar "epidemic" of "violence" associated with the dealing of another drug (ethanol), during the period of the Volstead Act in the US.

Another article told of the crimes claimed to be caused by addiction to a certain forbidden drug: "In deep denial about his drug problem, he began frequenting downtown office towers grabbing every laptop he could get his hands on and selling them on the street. He could get \$1,000 for some computers, keeping him deep in crack. . . . nearly 20 convictions for theft-related crimes, sending him to jail for more than two years."<sup>240</sup> Similarly left out of the article was consideration of the prohibition-created black market prices for trivial amounts of the banned substance; neither was mention made of the traditional use of the same drug, which has been consumed (like coffee) for millennia.

Calling an accidental drowning "murder", another writer bitterly complained that the "druggie" and the "drug lover" were to blame, and suggested that drug users be deprived of life: "The drug lovers or advocates seem to be willing to accept 16,000 illegal drug deaths a year and I am using their numbers, mine are a lot higher than 16,000. I am not willing to accept this illegal drug death. This life was worth more to me than every druggie since beginning of time getting high. This murder should bring people back to reality; at least the clean people."<sup>241</sup> The writer did not explain why drunk driving accidents should not be similarly attributed to anyone who disagrees with a policy of jailing alcohol users.

In Alabama, a judge declared that most crime is caused by drugs, and that adding extra punishments to a convict's sentence was acceptable, if

## **Drug War Propaganda**

the reason for doing so concerns forbidden drugs: "Drug treatment for convicts after they leave prison would reduce the high number of repeat offenders going back to Alabama's crowded prisons, a Birmingham judge told a state panel . . . [the judge] who handles criminal cases, said that in his 17 years on the bench, as many as seven of every 10 defendants have been 'dirty for drugs' and keep coming back on new crimes."<sup>242</sup> (Compare with the pronouncements of another judge concerning a crime-creating drug: "Ninety-nine out of a hundred boys between the ages of 10 and 17 who came before me charged with a crime have their fingers disfigured by yellow cigarette stains."<sup>243</sup> That was a US magistrate, in the 1920s.)

### **Drug Court Criminals**

Because of the crimes and illness associated, we are told, with drug use, officials and authorities endorse the concept of "drug courts." These are special courts where drug users agree to waive their rights, among them the right to a trial by jury. In exchange for this, the state agrees not to incarcerate the putative drug user, provided the user completes "drug treatment." Failure to successfully complete this treatment (usually due to a drug test indicating further drug usage), means the drug user is sent to prison. Add to this a post-release "treatment" program, and in effect, a drug user may be punished indefinitely, though the situation is rarely framed in this manner. One paper described a state's drug court system: "At the heart of the drug court system is a rewards and punishment incentive program. Failing a drug test or not appearing for counseling or in court means the judge can order the defendant thrown in jail for a few days. Because defendants have not yet been sentenced, failing the program means they go back in front of the judge to be sentenced on the original crimes."<sup>244</sup> While detailing the "punishments" (jail), the article did not describe the "rewards" given; rewards here are presumably the absence of punishments, a novel extension to the concept of positive reinforcement. Although the article mentioned heroin and OxyContin users as candidates for such a drug court, marijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug and, of course is the real target. The article did not mention marijuana.

In urging drug courts be adopted, one paper quoted a government official. "People are not arrested and prosecuted and jailed for first-time

## Drug War Propaganda

possession of a controlled drug for personal addiction . . . That almost doesn't happen."<sup>245</sup> The article did not explain why such laws need remain on the books if the application of possession and usage prohibition law "almost doesn't happen." Neither were mentioned the almost 700,000 yearly US arrests for marijuana possession. The article continued quoting the former drug czar: "People end up behind bars because they break into your house or your car, they steal money from your business or they're addicted themselves and they're selling drugs to other people to pay for their drug habit. That's why they get arrested and prosecuted."<sup>246</sup>

Another article claimed that "Rehabilitation" was the real goal of a local drug court: "An innovative effort to divert drug users from a life of crime kicked off this week when the Superior Court launched a drug court. The Adult Drug Court sends drug users caught in minor, nonviolent crimes to treatment, rather than prison. The goal is to cure users of their addictions so they do not resort to shoplifting, robbery and other crimes to support their drug habits."<sup>247</sup> No mention was made of which drugs were included: although hints are made that these courts are for hard-core heroin and cocaine addicts, marijuana use is not excluded. The phrase "drug users caught in minor, nonviolent crimes" seems calculated to make this insinuation: the reader forms an image of hard-core addicts, stealing for more money for drugs; while the new dragnet sweeps in casual marijuana users. Also, the "crimes" mentioned here can be simply the "crimes" of consuming the drugs per se. Drug court rhetoric seems designed to conflate the two: to allow the existence of the heroin and cocaine addict to justify forced treatment for any user of all forbidden drugs.

Another paper tarried over the question of violent offenders in drug court: "'It means rethinking everything we do with drug offenders,' said the prosecutor, who added that defendants eligible for drug court might not be facing drug charges. . . . What about violent offenders? You might say the jury is still out. Some argue that it makes sense to allow some violent offenders into the program because it is the substance abuse that prompts the violence. The number of domestic violence cases, for example, could be reduced if the violent offender were no longer a substance abuser."<sup>248</sup> Disregarding the specifics of the government plan, such "compassionate" drug court rhetoric associates

## **Drug War Propaganda**

drug use with crime, violence and illness. Unquestioned is the idea that any forbidden drug use is an "addiction", an "illness", which indicates forcible treatment and jail is needed. As always, if such an idea seems a weak excuse for forcible treatment and jail for the act of taking drugs per se, the emotional temperature may be raised by making reference to *the children's* suffering. For example, in one paper's argument for greater police power to incarcerate drug users ("Disarray In Drug Court"), a drug court "Coordinator" told heartbreaking stories of the dangers of drugs. "Coady is eloquent when describing the invisible costs of addiction. 'I've never seen a battered child where alcohol and drugs haven't been involved -- ever -- and it's just ignored.'"<sup>249</sup>

### **Crime/Violence/Illness as Rationale to Retain, Increase Punishment**

#### **Politicians, Prosecutors, and Punishment**

Politicians and other officials often cite drug problems: the crime, violence, and disease they say are caused by drugs as reason for increasing punishments for drug users. Such punishments are called "tools" that government may use to rid the land of the scourge of drugs. When making such claims, it is best to leave off reminding readers of the success of all such similar prohibition punishments.

In reporting of "Law Enforcement Battles" with drug users, one paper explained the need for a drug squad: "He emphasizes that anybody using or cooking methamphetamine is a danger to law enforcement and everybody else, adding that they are more prone to violence and generally extremely paranoid. Paranoia is just one of the side effects of meth use. Uniformed officers conducting routine traffic stops could find themselves facing a life or death situation if the driver happened to be high on meth at the time . . . 'Prisoners on methamphetamine can become suicidal when coming down from a methamphetamine high.'"<sup>250</sup> The article painted a devastating scene of amphetamine addiction; no mention was made of the lack of similar devastation for children prescribed amphetamines for not paying attention, or talking in class. The article did, however, mention that the "Drug Task Force receives between \$200,000 and \$250,000 annually to fight the war."<sup>251</sup>

Viewing one state's "fastest growing narcotics problem", another paper spoke of new punishments introduced to stay the plague: "A bill

## Drug War Propaganda

designed to limit access to ingredients used to manufacture methamphetamine in the Missouri Senate got initial approval last week, and could get final approval this week. . . . Initially, the bill strengthened penalties for theft of anhydrous ammonia. But amendments from other meth-related bills have broadened its scope."<sup>252</sup> The paper noted that police and prosecutors added provisions to the law presuming guilt for previously innocent actions: "Without a law making possession of a certain amount of the medicine a crime, narcotics officers have to find additional proof that the buyer plans to make meth, Glaser said."<sup>253</sup>

In space a paper gave to a politician, the official explained that due to the crime and illness caused by certain drugs, increasing the severity of punishments would allay such problems. The politician's testimonial well embodies the prohibition theme of this section. The published letter began with a heartbreaking tale of children who had killed themselves after taking MDMA (strongly reinforcing this "drug crime and illness" prohibition theme, among other themes). The official testimonial (a call to action) continued with a litany of ecstasy maladies:

But the effects of ecstasy don't end there. Other side effects include liver damage, kidney damage and other internal side effects. All medical research indicates that it's more dangerous than heroine because of its toxic nature. Use it three or four times, and it builds up a toxic level in your system. Studies have shown that ecstasy can damage the brain's neurotransmitters that regulate memory, and women who take the drug during pregnancy can damage their child's ability to learn.<sup>254</sup>

The official has set the scene; an explicit call to action follows (a request for support for the politician's new laws increasing punishments for drug users). As seen before, the users are conflated into dealers ("possessing and selling").

Earlier this year, I sponsored House Bill 471, which increases the penalties for possessing and selling ecstasy to the same levels for trafficking heroine and other dangerous drugs.

This gives prosecutors a more formidable weapon to use in



## Drug War Propaganda

their fight against the proliferation of ecstasy.

As a former assistant prosecutor in Jackson County, I can readily attest to the increase in popularity and use of ecstasy among high school and college students in our state. . . .

House Bill 471 elevates the crime of possessing more than 90 grams of ecstasy to a Class A felony, which includes mandatory jail sentences of 20 years to life.

Currently most of the ecstasy available in the United States comes from Europe, particularly Holland. But law enforcement is eager to get ahead of the curve on ecstasy and not risk falling behind as we did with the manufacturing and distribution of methamphetamine in Missouri.

HB 471 passed by a vote of 156-0 in the Missouri House and awaits final passage in the Senate. Yet the time crunch of the last week of the legislative session threatens to stall this bill for yet another year. If this is an issue you truly believe is important, I would urge everyone to contact their state senator.

We can't wait for another tragedy before we again consider taking action.<sup>255</sup>

Having fanned emotions over *our children* (another prohibitionist theme) and after casting out *the hated foreign devil* (another prohibitionist theme) the politician (a former prosecutor) now kindly requests more power for prosecutors.

### Reasons to be Punished

*Frequent punishments are always a sign of weakness or laziness on the part of a government.*

-- Jean Jacques Rousseau

Experts, officials and authorities are unanimous: the many terrible woes attributed to "drugs" are reason enough to retain the rights of government to imprison people for using the forbidden substances.

## Drug War Propaganda

One paper gave the testimonial of an expert as reason to continue jailing people who take medical cannabis: "Dr. John Dalco of the medical society told the committee that the use of marijuana as a pain killer or palliative is outweighed by such possible harmful side-effects as hypertension, particularly for elderly users, short-term memory loss, and dry eye that could lead to corneal damage."<sup>256</sup> Of course, the good doctor and paper omits mention of jail, which is the point of the proposed law. The paper does mention more problems due to marijuana use: "Respiratory problems can also be heightened through marijuana use, Dalco said. Dalco and others also dispute claims that marijuana is useful for treating glaucoma."<sup>257</sup> Nothing was said about prison-contracted "respiratory problems", however. Another writer explained that since the majority of "murder and rape and robbery" was due to drugs, "legalization" would cause widespread misery. "Advocates of legalization would eliminate forces that now investigate and enforce drug violations, claiming police would then be free to investigate real crimes, such as murder and rape and robbery. Who do they think are the majority committing these types of crimes? Straight and sober law-abiding citizens in the heat of passion? Come on! Think about the latest homicides you have read about in the papers or seen on the news. What was the one thing that they had in common? Drugs and drug users."<sup>258</sup>

Untroubled by concepts of civil disobedience, one writer exhorted citizens to obey government strictures, describing the criminality associated with forbidden drugs: "A few people don't agree that the speed limit is high enough, but we require they obey the law, simply because it is the law. So if you use illicit drugs you are a criminal, and should be provided medical help to break your addiction and obey the nation's laws. The penalty of breaking such a law should be compulsory detox and rehabilitation."<sup>259</sup> Similarly, a popular commentator justified efforts to jail citizens who consume illegal plants: "Now, here's why intoxication is so bad and why it shouldn't be allowed anywhere,"<sup>260</sup> the pundit proclaimed. (Presumably he wishes to reinstitute alcohol prohibition also, for alcohol can cause "intoxication.") Predictably invoking the heinous crimes committed against children (an emotional twist on this section's topic), the commentator continued: "Over the past 10 years, the number of abused and neglected children has more than doubled, from 1.4 million in '86 to more than 3 million in 1997. . . . Children whose parents abuse drugs are almost three times likelier to be

## Drug War Propaganda

abused and more than four times likelier to be neglected. Society cannot protect those children . . . So if . . . anybody can take whatever substance they want, heroin, crack cocaine, regular cocaine, methamphetamine, hallucinogens, you are putting children in danger, and society cannot protect them."<sup>261</sup> The commentator did not explain how the situation of a parent using cannabis differed from the situation of a parent using alcohol. Another writer mocked the idea that a plant could be used as medicine, citing the problems the plant was said to cause; the "children" were likewise held up as reason to jail adults. "Weedotherapy is an apt description of 'medicinal' marijuana. Not only is self-medication never wise, marijuana is a dangerous, delusional drug. . . . The fate of America's children hangs in the balance."<sup>262</sup>

Because government cannot continually "go in the house" of all citizens -- to verify the safety of the children -- those who take currently illegal drugs should be jailed, some say. "You want to compound that problem by allowing all intoxicants, all illegal drugs, as powerful as these drugs are -- you know how powerful methamphetamine is. You want to say that's OK, bring it on in, compound the alcohol problem by 10, so that these children, 3 million of them, can be abused, because society can't stop it, can't go in the house."<sup>263</sup> The editor of another paper agreed: since it is a crime to take or manufacture marijuana now, and because of the gangsters presently linked to some marijuana grow operations, this is reason that those who use marijuana must always be jailed. Otherwise "our communities" would surely be destroyed, we are told: "Legalizing drugs won't work . . . Criminal organizations and independent dealers will continue to torment their neighbors by operating in our neighbourhoods. These drug houses in turn will be ripped off by rival gangs and other crooks and will occasionally burn down. This will destroy the fabric of our communities."<sup>264</sup>

A police chief also explained that due to the criminality linked to the trade in illegal drugs, the use of currently forbidden drugs must never go unpunished: "I strongly disagree that an 'irrational law enforcement culture' irresponsibly places officers in the line of fire. What I find irrational is the delusion that a multibillion-dollar criminal enterprise would be rendered harmless if its primary product were legalized or ignored."<sup>265</sup> Of course, details concerning jail and punishment were left out of the article. Stressed, instead, was the loss of safety that would

## Drug War Propaganda

follow should citizens recklessly regain right to a "legalized" product: "Police officers bear witness daily to the consequences of the drug trade. We understand that the pursuit of safe communities will become a lost cause only when the men and women in blue are convinced to surrender our streets to lawlessness, while we quietly retreat to the safety of the precinct house."<sup>266</sup> The police testimonial presented by the paper wisely drew no parallels with alcohol prohibition.

Claiming that "the stats" show terrible crimes, violence and illness should follow changes in laws jailing adults for using forbidden drugs, a television talk-show host told why these laws must never be repealed: "All the stats show that as the intoxicants rise in this society, child abuse rises, DUIs rise, and all kinds of other social things, homelessness and everything else."<sup>267</sup> "To legalize all drugs would not remove the criminal element," an editor asserted. "If the . . . government wished to produce and sell drugs, organized crime would still be doing business as usual,"<sup>268</sup> the editor cried. Another writer agreed, claiming that since, he asserted, "legalizing drugs" had already been tried, such would be folly to repeat. Comparing "scummy addicts" to what grows in a petri dish, the writer denounced the idea of legalization: "[L]egalizing drugs in a 'small place' has been tried. In Switzerland, for example, they tried it in a park that quickly became known as needle park. They had to shut it down because it became a petri dish of scummy addicts, petty criminals and prostitutes. After that experience, the Swiss voted by 73 percent to reject drug legalization."<sup>269</sup> (Curiously, the writer left off writing about the Swiss referendum in 1999 that formalized the "state distribution of heroin to addicts" and that the "Swiss government has authorized the controlled distribution of prescription heroin since 1994."<sup>270</sup>) The writer went on, attacking "legalization" in Holland: "If they had noted what a sewer Amsterdam turned into because of legalized drugs, they could have saved some hassles."<sup>271</sup>

Neither did the writer mention that whereas the US has about 430 heroin addicts per 100,000 people, the Dutch have only 160.<sup>272</sup> Neither was mentioned that in 1998, the Dutch health ministry also extended a policy to "distribute free heroin to hard-core drug addicts," because an earlier "pilot scheme proved a success."<sup>273</sup> Noted one researcher of drug policy: when "pesky heretics argue that there are alternatives to punitive

## Drug War Propaganda

prohibition, one of their key examples is Dutch drug policy. U.S. drug warriors wish the Netherlands example did not exist, but since they cannot make even small countries disappear, they are reduced to making up their own 'facts' about it."<sup>274</sup>

In the propaganda of prohibition it is often useful to present a simplified and clear message that drugs are forbidden because they are bad.

### Prosecutors For Prison

Police and prosecutors, especially, among officials, experts and authorities, continually seek to increase punishments for citizens who use forbidden drugs. Any repeal, or lessening of penalties meted out to drug users is painted as a horrible travesty, the chaining of the Righteous in their crusade against cartels and kingpins.

"A statewide prosecutors' group told the governor and legislative leaders it would be dangerous to dismantle New York's Rockefeller drug laws. . . . [citing] 'grave concerns' among prosecutors over potential changes in drug offender sentencing guidelines,"<sup>275</sup> one paper wrote, conflating sellers and users with the term *drug offender*. "Association president [a prosecutor] urged state leaders not to dilute laws that have helped prosecutors imprison drug dealers and reduce crime rates. 'It is misguided and dangerous public policy, not compassion, to dismantle New York's drug laws.'"<sup>276</sup> The prosecutor was not reported to have mentioned falling crime rates in nearby areas without similar laws.

Police, also, seek to retain all powers given them at any time; mention of the theme of drug crime is all the justification ever needed. One paper explained that once a law is passed giving police new power, such laws must never expire or be repealed, just in case: "Police Say Keep Law On Books . . . Madison's Anti-loitering Ordinance Is About To Expire, But Police Want It Kept Around Just In Case. . . . police want to keep an anti-loitering ordinance on the books after its scheduled expiration . . . but don't intend to use it unless open-air drug sales stage a comeback on city streets."<sup>277</sup>

Upset by the growing strength of citizens seeking to repeal lengthy prison sentences for drug users, prosecutors in one state mounted a

## Drug War Propaganda

counter-offensive in the press. Stories of violent drug users run amok were related as reason to retain prosecutorial powers. Laws shifting powers to prosecutors must never be weakened because of "a woman whose husband was killed by a drug offender, [and] drug gangs that once ruled the mean streets of their towns, [and] statistics that show how many drug offenders now in prison are in fact repeat felons (two-thirds, they say). Dealing drugs, they insist, is an inherently violent business. 'My greater concern is that in this whole discussion, we seem to be conceding that no violence comes of this,' said [one prosecutor]. 'I'm not conceding that. People need to be reminded of everything that goes along with the drug trade.'"<sup>278</sup>

Concerning the same proposals to reduce harsh prison terms for nonviolent drug users, another official also reckoned that "violence" was a reason that nonviolent drug users must be imprisoned. Explained the politician, "We need to think in terms of what if the drug dealer wasn't caught and all that cocaine was on the streets . . . Drugs plus guns makes violence. . . . Drug dealing is big business, and drug dealers use violence to protect their turf."<sup>279</sup> (The politician did not mention similar violence linked to bootleg liquor sales during the prohibition of alcohol.)

Prosecutors, quick to hail increased penalties for drug users as new tools in the struggle against the scourge of drugs, are loathe to relinquish powers traditionally given to judges, or rights traditionally held by the citizen. Drug-related crime and violence, we are told, is the reason. "The state District Attorneys Assn. has urged [government] to go slow as they consider undoing the Rockefeller laws. Some prosecutors contend that the links between the drug trade and violence are strong and that putting away drug criminals makes the streets safer."<sup>280</sup>

Another writer agreed: since users of forbidden drugs imperil "the community", adults must always "pay the price" (that is, be jailed) for using such drugs. "Substance abuse is destructive and dangerous to the user and community. Those who profit from the use of illicit drugs and provide the young with mind-altering substances should pay the price for their criminal actions. Those who take drugs and cause harm should, too."<sup>281</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

A prosecutor painted a picture of violent crime, devastation, and harm to the children as reason to retain powers to jail drug users: "The veteran district attorney recalled the crack epidemic of the late-1980s and the early 1990s. 'Open-air drug markets, . . . Drive-by shootings. Kids caught in the crossfire. These things don't stop by accident. The drug dealers, members of the violent drug gangs, have been arrested and put in prison for long periods of time.'"<sup>282</sup>

Other prosecutors couldn't agree more. In editorial space one paper gave a prosecutor, he stressed that "violent crime" he linked to "drug dealing" is the reason long prison terms are needed for users of forbidden drugs. "Vigorous enforcement of the drug laws has played a major role in the dramatic reduction of crime -- particularly violent crime -- in our city. . . . drug dealers use violence to protect their turf, intimidate witnesses, rob one another and punish those who threaten their livelihood. . . . it would be a serious mistake to take away from law enforcement the tools that have let us make our streets safe again."<sup>283</sup> The prosecutor did not explain why the enforcement of such laws has not lessened the number of drug users, neither did he explain why the purity of drugs has increased while the price dropped. This is probably wise; such might confuse the target audience and detract from the point the prosecutor makes in the column. In an undiluted application of this section's prohibition propaganda theme, the prosecutor then linked all means of drug mayhem to any thought of decreasing prosecutorial powers: "We pay an enormous price from the proliferation of drugs -- health care, foster care and social services costs -- as well as the incredible devastation on the human level. We should not forget what our streets were like only a few short years ago -- open-air drug markets, drive-by shootings, children caught in the crossfire of dealers' feuds. These things haven't stopped by accident, but because dealers and drug gang members were put in prison."<sup>284</sup> Forced to confront the issue of jailing drug users and petty dealers, all is justified, prosecutors assure us, due to the crime and violence caused by "drugs."

"The fact is," the prosecutor asserted, "most drug offenders are locked up not because they possessed small amounts of drugs and were swept up by the Rockefeller laws, but because they repeatedly sold drugs to make money, possessed large quantities of drugs intended for sale or had prior convictions for violent felonies."<sup>285</sup> Laws imprisoning small-

## **Drug War Propaganda**

time nonviolent drug users must never be made less harsh, prosecutors claim, because of the violence and crime associated with illicit drugs. "86% were convicted not merely for possession of drugs, but for sale or intent to sell."<sup>286</sup> ("Intent to sell" legal provisions are helpful to both prosecutor and propagandist; they use "intent" to inflate simple possession into dealing where no sales can be shown.)

Prosecutors often explain that harsh drug laws imprisoning drug users are simply for the users' own good. "The 'threat' of the laws (a minimum sentence of two to four years) and the second felony offender law often persuade chronic drug offenders to choose treatment over jail time."<sup>287</sup> In other words, punishment need not fit the crime, but instead should be arbitrarily harsh, so as to give government "tools" to force recalcitrant drug users into accepting the "treatment." Retaining prosecutorial power (to imprison drug users) is defined as merely medicine for the sick.

### **Summary**

Prohibition propaganda calls those who take forbidden drugs sick and violent criminals. Distinctions between types of illegal drugs are often dropped, allowing the propagandist to say almost anything about "drugs." Drugs are said to be deadly, and "drug-related" problems are, asserts the prohibitionist, the reason why drugs are illegal.

In the rhetoric of prohibition, marijuana is often singled out as a cause of crime, illness, insanity, problems: a terrible menace to mind and body.

Unapproved, illicit amphetamines takes a prominent place in modern drug war propaganda, especially in the US and Thailand. Clandestine amphetamine laboratories also are counted as terrible poison factories which threaten children. Drug war propaganda portrays MDMA and other "dance drugs" to be deadly producers of crime and violence. Opiates like heroin and opioids like oxycodone likewise are producers of much crime and illness and great misery and death, say prohibitionists, as are cocaine and crack. The modern rhetoric of prohibitionism links the violence of the South American nation of Colombia with cocaine and heroin.



## Drug War Propaganda

The propaganda of prohibition declares drug users to be ill or criminal or both, depending on what is convenient for politicians. The rhetoric of prohibition says drug users are the walking dead. Drug war propaganda asserts that drug users are criminals, and moreover deserve special "drug courts" where government officials need not be constrained by outmoded concepts like constitutions and rights.

In their capacity as spiritual leaders, government prosecutors (ever the enthusiastic supporters of prosecution and punishment and prison) agree: punishment and prison are needed, they proclaim, to save souls and uphold morality. Doing their jobs as doctors, prosecutors assert that punishment and prison are essential medical instruments with which to cure the sick.

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## **Drug War Propaganda**

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Survival of Society

*"A crack baby is born; it's brain-damaged. There's a huge cost to society from the use of drugs . . ."*<sup>1</sup>

Another way the propagandist may whip up sentiment against forbidden drugs is to predict the ruin of society, should the users of the drug (or drugs) escape unpunished. The propagandist may use the propaganda technique called *glittering generality* to effect with this theme.<sup>2</sup> The assertion is that drug use imperils the (glittering generalities of) society, nation, culture, the future, if not the whole world. Those who take a stand against "the scourge of drugs" (usually a political stand) assure us they are the true saviors of society.

Implicit in the attribution of society's problems to the use of particular chemicals is the assumption and implication that these problems will disappear as prohibition becomes effective. The elimination of the drug and its use is thus characterized as crucial for the survival of the culture. Such claims have been characteristic of nearly all prohibitionist movements.<sup>3</sup>

### Downfall of Society

Bemoaning costs spent combating "drug abuse", one paper explained this expenditure was nonetheless necessary because of the great societal "damage" such drug use was said to cause, the "violence and damage done by substance abuse to individuals, families and society."<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, a politician justified increasing punishments for using forbidden drugs; problems to "society" were given as reason. "It is estimated that there are around 1.5 million drug addicts in the EU and more than 8,000 drug-related deaths per year. 'It is a problem that affects all developed societies, and one that no society can solve on its

## Drug War Propaganda

own."<sup>5</sup> Another politician agreed; an "anti-drugs" attitude (meaning increased punishments for drug users) is for the good of society: "I am convinced that a willingness to work together at national and local level will help to create a safer society."<sup>6</sup>

"There's a political benefit," noted one researcher. "If you can characterize something as a [drug] conspiracy, you can claim to be ridding society of an organized scourge."<sup>7</sup>

Prosecutors, also, tell us the impact on society of drugs well justifies ever more harsh punishments for drug users. "[W]e want to protect the community," revealed one prosecutor. "We can do that by putting the appropriate people in jail."<sup>8</sup> Quoting the prosecutor's reasons for jail, the article added that "tough sentences are needed to deal with violent drug gangs, not low-level offenders." The article also relayed the official warning against "minimizing the impact of small drug deals on society."<sup>9</sup>

In 1971, Richard Nixon revealed some of his thinking on the matter of drugs and society:

"Dope? Do you think the Russians allow dope? Hell no. Not if they can catch it, they send them up. You see, homosexuality, dope, uh, immorality in general: These are the enemies of strong *societies*. That's why the Communists and the left-wingers are pushing it. They're trying to destroy us."<sup>10</sup>

Urging government to more harshly punish drug users, one editor said society would suffer unless this was done: "The use of illegal drugs is probably the most serious problem facing America and most other nations . . . Added to this is the astronomical toll exacted on society. Workplace accidents, production losses, increases in crime, victimization, hospital, court, prison and related impacts cost Americans about \$110 billion annually."<sup>11</sup> The editor went on to list the many harms to society requiring government action: ". . . family fallout, corruption of enforcement officers and government officials employed by the very cartels they were charged to abolish and increasing numbers of seemingly legitimate businesses and corporations turning out to be drug trafficking money-laundering fronts."<sup>12</sup> The editor, wisely, did not mention similar societal problems associated with alcohol prohibition.

## Drug War Propaganda

Noting the uneven black market supply of heroin and the problems that caused, another editorial claimed destruction to society would surely result should laws prohibiting drug use be repealed. Deaths due to drug prohibition, according to the editorial, did "not justify calls by some to decriminalise heroin use or ease up on efforts to restrict supply. The shortage will save many lives, not to mention the other destructive effects of heroin addiction on individuals, their families and society at large."<sup>13</sup>

Because of what "could be a detriment to society," adults who take cannabis, it is implied, must be punished. "[The] president of the Dane County Medical Society, said . . . Legalizing smoked marijuana could be a detriment to society by making more people addicted to the drug . . . The State Medical Society is now opposed to any bills that would legalize smoked marijuana."<sup>14</sup>

Prosecutors agree; society is unraveling, and drugs are the cause: "Drugs, more than anything else, were responsible for the 'unraveling' of society; he told the jury; and manufacturers like [the defendant] were to blame. 'if we don't want it happening, we can stop it, long terms in prison, at least with this defendant,' he said. 'That's how we stop it.'"<sup>15</sup> The cure for the societal disease of drugs is always to prohibit things previously allowed; to increase the level of punishments for users of the forbidden drug. Another writer went even farther: those who speak of changing drug laws (to make them less harsh) should be punished as "dealers", for persons holding such an opinion are "disregarding the cost that drug use imposes on the rest of society."<sup>16</sup>

Because of the toll on our society of "drugs", we are assured, sick people who use marijuana medicinally must always be punished with prison. "I have personally seen the results of lives shattered by drug use and the horrendous impact drug use has on the state of public health in our community," explained one activist in his struggle against medical marijuana. "The use of alcohol and drugs (illicit and addictive prescription medication) takes a huge toll on our society. . . . HIV positive [persons] are infected with the Hepatitis C virus, and all are much more susceptible to disease like tuberculosis because of suppressed immune systems brought on by drug use. . . . they take these diseases into the community."<sup>17</sup> Society, to protect against the HIV

## Drug War Propaganda

positive people, must continue to jail marijuana smokers. Although adults were once free to purchase many over-the-counter remedies containing cannabis preparations, they must now be jailed for doing so. Why? Because returning these freedoms would surely cause many problems in society: "Medical science already provides a multitude of drugs and other substances to treat people in need of relief. Adding another that impairs the functioning of the human brain is not needed and will only contribute to a multitude of other problems in society."<sup>18</sup>

Politicians promise that using drugs (they declare are forbidden) will cause the destruction of society. Because of this (and money accepted from the US government), discussion of changing the law is also forbidden. "That topic [legalization] will not be discussed here," declared one Colombian politician. "When Mr. Restrepo called for a legalization debate last fall, he received media coverage in Canada and in his country. The Colombian government opposes legalization and recently accepted more than \$1.3 billion in U.S. military aid to fight the war on drugs."<sup>19</sup> Another politician agreed, "(drug use) destroys societies. Therefore, legalization is not an issue, so that debate will not happen here."<sup>20</sup>

In their quest for chemical cleanliness, officials and authorities must justify their means of conducting fishing expeditions in terms of a larger societal end. "To pass constitutional muster, Charleston officials must show that their drug-testing policy addresses a 'special need' or important government concern . . . the Supreme Court has permitted police or other government agencies to conduct searches without warrants if the objective is some greater societal good. . . . the [latest] program was designed to 'stem the tide of an epidemic' caused by pregnant women using cocaine. He says the social and economic costs of the problem required immediate government action."<sup>21</sup>

Invoking the image of "poison", and describing the meth user as diseased, another editorial told also of the problems to society caused by the drug. "Meth is 'Pure Poison' . . . Meth knows no bounds in its victims. People of all races, ages and income levels, men and women, civic-minded people, and derelicts, have all been included in the legions of meth victims. The results on individuals are bad enough alone, but behind every meth abuser are friends, family members and loved ones

## Drug War Propaganda

who have been affected by the meth abuser's disease."<sup>22</sup> The editorial did not mention that amphetamines are prescribed for children in government schools, to make children more obedient, and more attentive to their lessons.

"It's Time To Get Tough On Drugs And Driving," revealed another report. "The lethal mix of drugs and driving is fast becoming one of the scariest threats on the road today. The widespread availability of illicit drugs -- especially among young people who drive -- is taking a deadly toll, emergency physicians and substance abuse experts warn."<sup>23</sup>

Career bureaucrats justify laws jailing drug users by invoking the great damages to society that are caused by forbidden drugs. "[T]he real impact of legalizing drugs," officials say, would be terrible. "Each year drug use costs the U.S. 52,000 drug-related deaths and roughly \$110 billion in additional societal costs. . . . More people using drugs would mean more addicts, more traffic fatalities, more human and economic costs."<sup>24</sup> What can society do to save itself? Officials tell us that "societal disapproval," (meaning prison for adults caught using forbidden drugs), is a reason that some "young people never try drugs."<sup>25</sup> Other career bureaucrats agree: drugs that are currently forbidden must always remain illegal, to protect society. "When drugs are more plentiful, cheaper and purer, more people become addicted. Increased drug supply leads to higher levels of drug demand and to greater amounts of social harm. We need to be firm in pursuing, arresting and punishing those who sell and traffic in illegal drugs."<sup>26</sup>

"Illegal drugs are a distraction from life and a nuisance to all of us. We all pay a price for illegal drug use. Some of us pay more than others, but we all pay a price. I reiterate, illegal drugs must be kept illegal for all our sakes," another writer agreed.<sup>27</sup>

One paper reported that a local medical doctor declared medical marijuana to be a curse upon society which would create legions of marijuana addicts should adults not be jailed for using it. "Legalizing smoked marijuana could be a detriment to society by making more people addicted to the drug. . . . The State Medical Society is now opposed to any bills that would legalize smoked marijuana."<sup>28</sup> "Drug legalization would be a social catastrophe," declared another politician.



## Drug War Propaganda

29

"Why would drug use and addiction -- and all their attendant harms -- not become more common when the stigma of illegality has been lifted and the fear of being arrested is eliminated?" asked a prosecutor. "Are parents and teachers likely to find it easier to persuade teenagers not to try cocaine or heroin after they are made legal?"<sup>30</sup> Drugs that are now forbidden must always remain forbidden, lest society suffer, politicians and prosecutors tell us, as they plead for continued or increased power. "Legalization would only make a tragic situation worse: an increase in the number of drug users; a decrease in the number of addicts getting treatment; a corresponding increase in violence and property crimes by drug users; and the persistence of drug crews' turf wars."<sup>31</sup> The US prosecutor did not mention why turf wars over ethanol ceased when that drug's prohibition was repealed.

Author James Q. Wilson writes often on the possible ruin and potential devastation that might happen should adults not be jailed for using forbidden drugs. The unknown societal ruin, Wilson assures us, is reason enough to continue to jail adults for consuming plants like cannabis. (Wilson, like most prohibitionists, prefers to euphemize "jail" into something less harsh sounding. Rather than defending *jail* per se, prohibitionist propagandists appear to find attacking "legalization" more effective.)

Wilson tells of the harms ensuing should prices drop for drugs. Let's examine one of his arguments in some detail.

After prices for forbidden substances drop fiftyfold, says Wilson, "Consumption will go up dramatically," Wilson warns.<sup>32</sup> Wilson then paints horrible pictures of societal wastelands: "Now suppose after legalization we have 5 million [heroin addicted] users, with 1 million totally zonked."<sup>33</sup> Sliding easily from heroin users to addicts, Wilson then claims that hoards of heroin addicts will plunder the countryside, causing great damage to society. Wilson does not mention that while prices for cocaine and heroin plummeted during the 1990s, crime rates fell also. (Prices fell in areas where there was no increase in incarceration rates like Canada, lest one be tempted to attribute fall in crime rate with increases in US incarceration rates.) Moving from

## Drug War Propaganda

heroin users, to addicts, to all "drugs", Wilson continues the stoned society scare scenario:

We can support the 1 million on welfare, though I think the political chance of that is utterly remote. Or we can let them fend for themselves by stealing. They may well steal more than the 200,000 steal when the price of drugs is much higher. Take a guess. But remember that after we create the 1 million, we can't turn the clock back. We shall have them forever.

Or to take another example. Suppose we have 15,000 people killed by drunken drivers. How many will be killed by coke-or heroin-addicted drivers if access to those products becomes as easy as access to alcohol is now? There is no way to tell, but it would be foolish to assume that the number would be trivial.<sup>34</sup>

Compare Wilson's proclamations concerning the devastation of legally accessible drugs with an earlier proclamation of societal damages: "If the law were changed, we'd have to shut down our plants. Everything in the United States is keyed up to a new pace which started with [criminalization of the drug]. The speed at which we run our . . . cars, operate our intricate machinery, and generally live, would be impossible with [the drug]. No, there is no chance even for modification."<sup>35</sup> The speaker was Henry Ford, the year was 1928 and the prohibited drug at the time was alcohol. The idea expressed by Henry Ford and James Q. Wilson and many others seems to boil down to the following: because new inventions (cars) exist, adults must be jailed for consuming substances they have previously been able to legally consume.

Wilson continues, asking us to ask ourselves how can marriage survive, how can babies be healthy, how can society survive should laws be repealed that jail adults for taking drugs? Wilson, shrewdly, does not mention that adults were free to take all the various substances he conflates, with none of the scourges which Wilson expands upon: "Or ask how many marriages, now afflicted by alcoholism, will be afflicted by drug abuse when drugs become legal. Or how many pregnancies that now are harmed by fetal alcohol syndrome will be harmed by fetal drug syndrome." Wilson finishes his article with a plea for prison. Of course,

## Drug War Propaganda

prison is softened, euphemised to something less likely to alarm the herd. Wilson euphemizes prison and jail into *coercion* which is merely in the service of *treatment*. "Recall also that most people in drug treatment are there because of some form of coercion. Very few walk in on their own. Take away coercion, and you take away treatment for all but a few burned-out addicts."

Having held up hoards of thieving heroin addicts as reason for using "coercion" on all drug users -- meaning , presumably, *those who take cannabis* -- Wilson proceeds to justify these coercive means as truly serving the end goal of a libertarian society.

John Stuart Mill, the father of modern libertarians, argued that people can only restrict the freedom of another for their self-protection, and society can only exert power over its members against their will in order to prevent harm to others. I think that the harm to others from drug legalization will be greater than the harm -- and it is a great harm -- that now exists from keeping these drugs illegal.<sup>36</sup>

The laws that implement prohibition take away freedoms that citizens once held. The propagandist must justify this loss of freedom as serving a greater end goal. If the propagandist can claim that previous freedoms a people retained were in reality slavery; and that restriction in liberty gives greater freedom, then so much the better.

### Democracy

The propaganda of prohibition claims that beloved institutions like *democracy* shall fall should "drugs" be "legitimized." (That is to say, democracy would collapse, should adults not be jailed for using the targeted, forbidden drug; the details concerning prison are most often omitted.) Classic *glittering generalities* are sweeping statements that link a cause to a general value.<sup>37</sup> In this case, the cause is prohibition; the general value is the preservation of *democracy*. This rhetoric creates two main classes of imagery. At times the propagandist presents images of debauched (young) people, too addled and languid to move, much less participate in democracy. At other times, the prohibitionist may illustrate his points with fears of invading foreign terror, secret armies, and communist carnage to topple democracy.

## Drug War Propaganda

One paper stressed that a nation was the "hemisphere's second-oldest democracy" and because of this, military actions must be taken against "drug lords and narco-terrorists," and American *users*. "Drug lords and narco-terrorists, subsidized by American cocaine and heroin users, have all but divided this hemisphere's second-oldest democracy and threaten the stability of Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Venezuela."<sup>38</sup>

Another columnist lashed out against citizens who had called into question the jobs of local prosecutors. Questioning government officials, "would, quite simply, degrade law enforcement . . . a threat to district attorneys around the state [leading to] an awful fate . . . would put [the] justice system on notice [and] endanger the justice system. . . . [T]his anti-DA pogrom [is] a threat to justice everywhere . . . a menace to the fundamentals of egalitarianism and democracy."<sup>39</sup> The editor did not explain how an election -- the epitome of democracy -- was a menace to democracy.

"Colombia Wars Won't Be Another Vietnam," promised one headline. The article, a prepared statement from government, revealed "democracy" was the reason government plans must be supported. "These misfortunes threaten not just Colombia but its neighbors and many others around the world," the government official asserted. "Drug trafficking and the corruption, violence and money laundering engendered by drugs respect no boundaries. Cocaine and heroin flowing out of Colombia poison young Brazilians, Germans and North Americans without distinction. Threats to democracy and human rights concern us all."<sup>40</sup> Because of the child-poisoners and threats to democracy says Peter Romero (US assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs), we must support government plans all the more. Slaughtering peasants isn't mentioned. Neither is raining herbicides upon the land that are banned in the US. That is softened, also. Instead, we're given a long list of all the nice things the US will do; that's The Plan. "Plan Colombia calls for large-scale investments to revitalize the economy, strengthen democratic institutions, enhance respect for human rights, protect the environment, provide alternative income sources to small-scale coca growers and undertake a vigorous counter-drug program to re-establish the rule of law and deprive the illegal armed groups and criminal elements of their source of illicit income."<sup>41</sup> Romero offers a glittering list of generally nice things done

## Drug War Propaganda

for Colombia; merely to "strengthen democratic institutions" is the plan.

Another politician formed yet greater vistas of drug-related downfall: "Drug use and addiction would soar; hospitals would be filled with many more drug emergency cases; child abuse would increase; the cost of treatment and social welfare would rise; there would be more drug-related accidents at work and on the road."<sup>42</sup> Yet in the face of the dismal fate that "would" surely follow (should adults not be jailed for using forbidden drugs), the politician's subordinate vowed, in the name of democratic institutions, to shield "our communities" from such an awful outcome. "We will shield our communities from the terrible human toll taken by illegal drugs. And we'll stop illegal drug use and the drug trade from funding threats to democratic institutions throughout our hemisphere."<sup>43</sup>

"The moral foundation of our nation is founded on free, independent thinking," revealed another editor. Because of the "democratic republic", adults must always be jailed for using certain forbidden drugs: "The ability to distinguish right from wrong and individual responsibility form the basis for our democratic republic. Drugs destroy the ability to be free and think independently."<sup>44</sup> If adults are not imprisoned for taking cannabis, this would will destroy life, if not democracy, as we know it: "Drugs destroy all that Alaskans hold dear. . . . Drug legalization, if allowed, will destroy democracy as we know it."<sup>45</sup> The writer did not explain how the nation was founded and thrived for roughly 130 years with "drug legalization" in place without destruction of the democratic republic. Compare with the proclamations of an earlier era: "if this pernicious practice obtains among adult Americans the Ruin of the Republic is at hand."<sup>46</sup> The drug in that case was nicotine in the form of cigarettes; the year was 1884.

One editorial saw the threat to democracy coming from cartels. "[D]rug cartels are, by definition, at war against the rule of law. That puts the traffickers directly blocking the only road to a modern, prosperous, democratic Mexico. Conversely, a corrupted narco-state in which the drug traffickers are stronger than government and law enforcement is a recipe for Mexico's ruin."<sup>47</sup>

The US "drug czar" agreed: why, democracy itself was at stake! Rolling

## Drug War Propaganda

out a "new tool in the war against alcohol and other drugs -- patriotism," (the new tool being the the "new" rhetoric), the drug czar insinuated that using marijuana would bring down democracy. "Drugs are not only dangerous for you and your friends," he said. "It's bad for your country and bad for people who want to live in peace and *democracy*." Continued the czar: "Marijuana is the most misunderstood drug . . . because it's peddled as harmless."<sup>48</sup>

### Security

The glittering generality of *national security* may also be usefully stressed as another rationale for jailing citizens found using forbidden drugs. Whipping up support for government plans involves playing upon fears of insecurity. Threats to "security" are emphasized; details concerning jail are euphemized.

One editorial spoke of the threats to security as reason to support government plans. "Countering Mexico's drug cartels . . . must be put front and center on Washington's agenda. . . . [drug cartels are] enemies of security and stability [and] dangerous to democratic prospects and the rule of law."<sup>49</sup> Another paper decried the smuggling of forbidden drugs as a threat to security: "Expressing concern over the continuing production of opium . . . the resulting smuggling of opiates and related criminal activities in West Asia as a whole might undermine the economic and social stability and jeopardise peace and security in the region."<sup>50</sup> The idea of repealing prohibitions against the dreaded plants, thus eliminating smuggling, was not mentioned.

In column space given one politician, the paper relayed the government official's message. The "U.S. Must Help In Drug War," was the urgent headline chosen by the editors. "National security" was under attack, thus citizens must all the more support and obey government: "U.S. vital interests are at stake in South America's violent drug war, Nebraska Sen. Chuck Hagel said Thursday. Hagel, who has just returned from a tour of battleground bases in Colombia and Ecuador, said narcotics traffickers are a threat to U.S. national security, as well as American economic and societal interests."<sup>51</sup> "[T]here is the mortal peril posed [by drug cartels] to Mexico's national security and its people's hopes for a decent future,"<sup>52</sup> an editorial concurred.

## Drug War Propaganda

### Community

Drugs must never be legalized, drug users must never go unpunished, prohibitions must never be repealed. The cost to the *community*, the rhetoric of prohibition stresses, would be far too great.

Forbidden drugs are said to threaten *our community*: "[W]e have been able to identify people that we believe threaten our community by the sale of drugs."<sup>53</sup> Drugs and drug users are said to be "Public Enemy Number One" and this is the reason drug users must be targeted: "Drugs and guns continue to be enemies No. 1 and No. 2 in our communities."<sup>54</sup> (Compare with the threat to our community of an earlier age: "Marihuana is that drug -- a violent narcotic -- an unspeakable scourge -- The Real Public Enemy Number One!"<sup>55</sup>) Likewise, a police "war" against "addicts" was launched in another area; the concerned community was the stated reason. "Police have declared war on Cabramatta's drug addicts . . . [A new plan] committed police to tackling drugs as the 'number one priority' and recognised the level of community concern."<sup>56</sup>

Drug users ruin communities, one editor declared. "The consequences of drug abuse ruin minds, lives and communities. Illegal drug abuse has overwhelmed the criminal-justice system, especially the courts and prisons, and contributed to corruption in this country, as well as other nations."<sup>57</sup> Authorities agree: drug users will be a perpetual community problem: "[Amphetamine] addiction will still be a huge community problem" because new supplies will be created.<sup>58</sup>

A member of the drug treatment industry was of a similar mind: the community is in peril; only by jailing drug users can the community survive. "No To Medicinal Pot . . . I have personally seen the results of lives shattered by drug use and the horrendous impact drug use has on the state of public health in our community. . . . These people [with HIV] do not live in isolation from the rest of our community, they are part of the community. As such they take these diseases into the community."<sup>59</sup> Saviors of *our community* agree: people who take marijuana must be jailed.

President Bush tells us a reason drug users must always be punished more harshly than before, is to help the *community*. In one speech

## Drug War Propaganda

introducing his selection for drug czar, "community" was stressed, again and again. "[T]he Office of Faith-Based and *Community* Initiatives. . . . we have three members from the *community*, anti-drug *communities*. . . the *Community* Anti-drug Coalitions of America. . . . the Drug-Free *Communities* Advisory Commission. . . . Families, schools, *communities* and faith-based organizations shape the character of young people. . . . We must increase funding for the drug-free *communities* program . . . federal anti-drug partnerships with local faith-based and *community* groups."<sup>60</sup> The new czar also invoked *our communities* as justification for actions taken against citizens, vowing to save "*our communities* from the terrible human toll taken by illegal drugs."<sup>61</sup> It is perhaps understandable that President Bush and his drug czar Walters would find it convenient to emphasize *community*; others, also, have realized that *community* sounds more acceptable than "state" or "government." The euphemism is a classic one. (Lenin, 1917: "Engels undoubtedly, in his own as well as in Marx's name, suggests to the leader of the German workers' party that the word 'state' be struck out of the programme and replaced by the word '*community*'. "<sup>62</sup>)

### Nation

Another somewhat less offensive way for the propagandist to say "because of government dictates," or "for reasons of state" is to claim action must be taken *for your country* or *for the good of the nation*. This glittering generality appeals to a sense of nationalism or patriotism.

A DEA publication, "Drugs of Abuse," intended for distribution to the general public, informs us their task is to prevent drugs from destroying the nation. "Like the entire national effort to reduce the level of violence brought about by drug abuse," the DEA declared. The "physiological effects of drug abuse are destroying individual potential and subsequently the nation's well-being."<sup>63</sup>

The very name of one organization, the "Partnership for a Drug-Free *America*", plays upon this theme. (The partnership is a "national coordinator of anti-drug user rhetoric."<sup>64</sup>) The prohibitionist informs the target that action must be taken "against drugs" to save America (or Mexico, etc.) This invariably means the audience must give more power



## Drug War Propaganda

to government, to hunt down and jail drug users.

"Illegal drugs are drawing this country into the abyss," one writer explained. "[I]f the drug lovers or advocates ever get their way we'll all get a chance to see hell on earth."<sup>65</sup> Should adults not be jailed for using drugs that are currently forbidden, the country would fall into the pit. The nation would be a dismal wasteland, prohibitionists assert, should adults no longer be jailed for using forbidden drugs: "What would life be like in America today if drugs were legal? Would you want to have dealings with any of the following people if they were on drugs or coming off of drugs? Your airplane pilot, your doctor or surgeon, bus driver, subway or train engineer. How about the fellow driving down the road at you, while you're driving your car down the highway?"<sup>66</sup> Apparently convinced that current prohibitions are effective at stopping those who desire drugs from obtaining them, the writer sees an America that would be a jungle of drugged pilots, doctors, drivers, "if drugs were legal."

Another argument invokes nation as follows. Since the nation allows alcohol and tobacco, and, we are reminded, look at the many problems linked to each, then, (the argument continues), how can "we allow" yet another terrible, horrible bane upon the country? In rejecting changes to laws jailing adults for taking cannabis, one writer posed this seeming dilemma. "For many years the citizenry of the United States have had access to two legal substances which would classify as drugs - tobacco and alcohol [causing] an untold, almost immeasurable, amount of misery, woe and disease. How can we think of adding another to this list? Marijuana is not an innocuous substance."<sup>67</sup> The writer did not mention prison. Another politician agreed; enough can never be said about "the tragic, horrible impact drug abuse has had on the people of this country."<sup>68</sup>

Saying perhaps more than was realized, one paper reported of the rhetorical temperature concerning a forbidden drug. "Rhetorically, too, the meth issue is heating up [because a politician] termed methamphetamine as 'maybe the biggest threat internally to the United States in our lifetime, and I don't say that lightly.'"<sup>69</sup> It was bluntly admitted that ratcheting up rhetoric and prison time seen in such "meth-related bills," was merely "designed to show resolve and build political

## Drug War Propaganda

momentum."<sup>70</sup>

Similar designs were seen in another editorial, which praised the drug-fighting efforts of a bureaucrat. America, the editorial claimed, is under a "plague": "The use of so-called club drugs, like ecstasy, by teenagers is increasing almost exponentially. Heroin is making a comeback. The methamphetamine plague continues. About 6 percent of Americans, 14 million of us, use illegal narcotics." The editorial claimed that "simply" jailing adults "for drug crimes" was not enough: users (conflated with "addicts") must be force-treated, as well.<sup>71</sup> Another editorial reminded readers that the nation's military must be eternally vigilant for an impending doomsday, and can't "be in La-La Land when the stuff hits the fan. That officers at a missile silo, for example, might be high on drugs is a frightening end-of-the-world scenario."<sup>72</sup>

One politician opposed efforts to lessen jail time for adults possessing small amounts of drugs, citing the nation's yet unblockaded borders as reason to step up the fight. "We don't blockade our borders," noted the politician. "We don't sentence to death people who poison our kids."<sup>73</sup> Another politician agreed, we must "enforce our borders to stop the flow of drugs into America."<sup>74</sup> Officials concur: due to "the drug problem throughout our nation,"<sup>75</sup> government must always do more.

Another writer suggested that to solve "our nation's drug problems," anyone who spoke out for reducing drug punishments ("drug policy experts"), should themselves be punished: "those who entice others, either directly or indirectly, to become involved with illicit drugs [should be] held liable for the consequences."<sup>76</sup> In other words, because of drugs, for the good of the nation, government must not allow citizens to disagree with government drug policy. The writer did not mention traditional rights to free speech, ostensibly protected in the writer's nation.

### World

The drug abuser pollutes himself as well as his community, endangering both. . . to the normally socialized person he is a dangerous defiler of the sacred. Hence, his incapacitation is amply justified. After all, what greater good is there than saving the family, the clan, the nation, indeed the whole world

## **Drug War Propaganda**

from certain destruction?<sup>77</sup>

The propaganda of prohibition declares that drugs and drug users must be eliminated, because drugs are a terrible scourge upon the world. Fortunately, there is a solution, officials and authorities say. By giving up more rights and freedoms, by giving more power to government officials, we can solve the world's drug problems that authorities describe.

"ECO Chief Denounces Regional Drug Trade . . . The Iranian head of the Economic Cooperation Organization . . . told IRNA that the ECO has arranged plans with the United Nations and other international bodies to fight this scourge of mankind."<sup>78</sup> Other government officials and secret narcotics police agents agree: if we let drug cartels "take over", then "international chaos" shall be the result: "But most important, [former DEA agent] Toft would say, if we let criminals and narco-terrorists take over the governments of our Latin American neighbors, we'll have more than a drug war on our hands; we'll have international chaos."<sup>79</sup>

Similar pronouncements are made by politicians elsewhere. Over and over we are told to support government policy to rid the world of drugs, policy that gives more power to government. "Jim Gibbons, R-Nev., back from a weekend trip to Colombia, said this week he is certain that cultivation of coca leaves used to make cocaine will spread through South America if the United States does not step up to help fight its production in the region."<sup>80</sup> "We in the United States have as deep and important interest in the eradication of drugs as the people of Colombia", another prohibitionist politician told the target audience.<sup>81</sup> The specific drugs, politicians, and regions are seemingly interchangeable. To save the world from the plague of drugs, officials say, people must give more power to government officials, people must give up a few of those old rights that get in the way of police. We must, in order to save the world.

### **The Future**

For the future: the future of our children, the rhetoric of prohibition repeats, we must always jail adults for using forbidden drugs. Otherwise, generations to come shall suffer for the sins of drug users

## Drug War Propaganda

present. "Fighting illegal drugs is a priority for President Bush because drugs destroy our neighborhoods, harm our children and ruin lives,"<sup>82</sup>, a political spokesman announced.

Because of the terrible dangers to the children from illegal drug manufacture, such drugs must always remain illegal. "The danger from contaminants that still lurk in former meth labs may not reveal itself for many years . . . children who rub their hands on a wall contaminated with iodine or phosphorous and then lick their hands would not likely get sick right away, but kidney or liver damage could show up later."<sup>83</sup>

If adults were not jailed for using forbidden drugs, prohibitionists say, then people might be able to use drugs, and that would surely spell doom for future generations. "Have people really thought about the consequences of making drugs legal?" one writer inquired. A wasteland scenario was held up as the result of not jailing adults who use forbidden drugs: "Would we really be unconcerned, if the bus driver who picks up our little children, could puff a legal marijuana cigarette while navigating the bus to the schoolhouse?"

"If the bus had an accident," the concerned writer continued, "and the firefighters and EMT rescuers arrived smelling of wine, and had needle marks on their arms, would we find that upsetting? Could we endure, police officers on drugs, stopping our kids, who were coming home from a date, and giving them a ticket for some offense?"

"When the kids went to court to have their case heard, would we feel more comfortable with lawyers and a judge who had just puffed a 'legal' joint in his chambers, before coming out to render a sage legal decision?"<sup>84</sup>

You see, the prohibitionist often asserts, the future of "our little children" is at stake. Because of "our little children," the propagandist says, voice cracking with emotion, adults must never go unpunished for using illicit drugs. Police and other government officials, who earn their living and budgets from "fighting" the "war" on drugs, agree: to do anything else would endanger the future of our children. "What's the alternative," narcotics police rhetorically ask, "let chaos prevail?" Otherwise there would be "twisted addicts damaging children [thus converting] neighborhoods into danger zones," government officials

## Drug War Propaganda

assure us.<sup>85</sup>

One "alternative" which government officials and authorities find profitable to ignore or denounce, is the option of returning to citizens those freedoms traditionally held by them. That would be "chaos", officials say. Experts concur: giving back to adults rights once retained would be unthinkable. "There is no simple answer to this tragedy [of drug use]. Certainly not legalization, which would destroy even more lives."<sup>86</sup> Another editor agreed: "The drug legalization movement in Alaska is targeting our children. The youth of Alaska need to know drugs are harmful. . . . drugs destroy families and the true victims are our children."<sup>87</sup> Drugs must never be made legal again, the prohibitionist shouts, because the future of our children are at stake.

One paper suggested that marijuana would cause future generations to never be born. "Research shows that sperm swim much more slowly when heavily exposed to the drug's active ingredient, increasing the chance of infertility among dope smokers."<sup>88</sup> Reading the article, however, it was admitted that the research mentioned was done in vitro, and that "a lot more [cannabis] than even a chronic dope abuser" could consume would be needed for such an effect in the human body.

### Summary

The propaganda of prohibition declares the ruin of society will follow, if freedoms previously held by adults should be again returned to them. If adults are once again not imprisoned for using forbidden drugs like marijuana and opium, then society will certainly fall.

The propagandist uses the standard propaganda technique of the *glittering generality* to good effect. Prohibition, says the prohibitionist, is responsible for preserving all the good things in life. The glittering generalities of society, democracy, national security, the community, the nation, world peace and even the entire future itself, are, says the prohibitionist, dependent on prohibition. Conversely, society, democracy, national security, community, nation, world peace and the future are all said to be imperiled by any thought or talk of returning to adults the traditional freedom to consume drugs.

## Drug War Propaganda

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Gates of Hell

*[Alcohol and tobacco serve as a gateway to pot, which in turn serves as a gateway to 'harder' drugs such as speed, acid, and blow.]*<sup>1</sup>

A frequent theme in the prohibitionist quest to vilify drugs and their users, is for the propagandist to assert drugs have an evil irresistible power. This is the idea that using certain drugs leads to use of other drugs; or that *any* use of some drugs leads to ruin. "I liked the initial euphoria of kind of altering my mind. . . I became a slave to drugs and alcohol."<sup>2</sup>

The history of prohibitionist pronouncements is replete with examples which propose a "domino theory" of chemical usage. Such a theory holds that the use of a particular drug (usually the one presently targeted for prohibition) inevitably and with rare exception leads to the use of other drugs (usually drugs already prohibited or drugs already defined as evil).<sup>3</sup>

The idea that using one drug will "lead to" the use of other drugs is often referred to as "the gateway" theory, also called "the domino" theory, or sometimes "the stepping-stone" theory. The gateway theory is similar in form to the *slippery slope* logical fallacy; it is implied that if one drug is used, this will lead to other, more harmful, drugs (or lead to perversion, sin, etc.) The clever propagandist won't get caught actually saying that using one drug "causes" use of other drugs; this causality is suggested, instead. The suggestion is seen in phrases like, "is associated with", or "leads to", or "is correlated with", or "is a gateway to", "a stepping-stone to", or "linked with." It is as if the propagandist knows making the assertion that using one drug *causes* use of another would be too blatant or obvious, and would be rejected by the target audience. So instead, the causality is only suggested; the reader is left to complete the connection.

## Drug War Propaganda

### Marijuana Stepping-Stone

The propaganda of prohibition is full of examples of the claim that marijuana 'leads to the harder stuff.' One writer, telling of an overdose that happened in his area, declared the gateway of marijuana use was at fault: "Marijuana is known as the gateway drug for good reason, and if we cease to underestimate its physiological and psychological impact, we'll start reducing the numbers of overdose victims in the future."<sup>4</sup> A prosecutor, in arguing for retaining prosecutorial powers, also spoke of the gateway of marijuana use. The prosecutor called "marijuana the 'gateway to other drugs' and a first step toward other crimes."<sup>5</sup>

Quoting a government official, another paper saw cannabis as a gateway drug. "[T]he death of Jason . . . was a 'very graphic example' of cannabis being a 'gateway drug'. . . . 'I have dealt with a number of cases where vulnerable youngsters from disturbed backgrounds began taking cannabis at an early age and progressed to harder drugs.'"<sup>6</sup> Similarly, one writer in Illinois saw in industrial hemp the gateway drug of marijuana lurking, a virulent pathogen that must not be unleashed on society: "Industrial hemp is not a harmless crop that can be introduced to our communities. Marijuana is considered a gateway drug that can lead to use of increasingly more damaging drugs. . . . Introducing hemp into a community is choosing to introduce a known pathogen that has the potential to cause great harm."<sup>7</sup>

Citing the experts, one paper saw marijuana "addiction" as a floodgate to the harder stuff: "Studies have documented the similarity in marijuana addiction, and difficulty of withdrawal, to that of heroin or cocaine. Drug experts consider marijuana a 'gateway' drug that opens the door to experimentation with more harmful illegal drugs."<sup>8</sup>

Drug warriors like Joseph Califano couldn't agree more; marijuana will lead to the harder stuff: "12- to 17-year-olds who smoke marijuana are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than those who don't."<sup>9</sup>

One paper, in arguing for the jailing of medical marijuana users, told of the dangers of this gateway drug. We must, the paper pleaded, jail people who use marijuana medicinally, because otherwise, our children will move on to the harder stuff. "[W]hen an adolescent becomes used to the effects of marijuana, many are prepared, physically and

## Drug War Propaganda

psychologically, to seek a more intense high."<sup>10</sup>

Terrible anecdotes of the gateway of marijuana are presented for readers. There were "rehab and outpatient programs. But there were also relapses. Several months later, Ian Katz died of an overdose at age 20. He started smoking pot when he was 13."<sup>11</sup> Another paper selected a similar tale: "Craig . . . was smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol when he was 15. He dropped out of . . . High School his sophomore year. He moved out of his parents' home when he was 16. He soon started 'moving up the drug tree,' . . . eating psychedelic mushrooms, 'dropping acid' and taking other hallucinogens. Then he started using cocaine and was soon selling it."<sup>12</sup> Another paper, another anecdote: "Madeleine started with marijuana and reds, then moved on to alcohol and cocaine."<sup>13</sup> And another: "Williams first began experimenting with drugs at the age of 13, starting with marijuana. It progressed from a weekend-party thing to an almost-every-day habit. . . . 'I always promised myself that I would never do cocaine, and that ended up being my drug of choice. Everybody says pot is a gateway drug, and I totally believe that now.'"<sup>14</sup>

In one state, although voters had twice approved a medicinal marijuana measure by increasingly large majorities, politicians balked at actually implementing the voters' mandate. "Other panelists were concerned about marijuana usage leading to addiction and other drugs."<sup>15</sup>

While dismissing the idea that cannabis could have value as medicine (implicitly supporting the jailing of people using cannabis for medicine), an editorial claimed there was much proof that cannabis was a gateway to hard drugs. "There is no credible evidence that pot smoking has any significant medicinal benefits. There is much evidence, however, to show that pot can be a gateway drug to much worse addictive substances."<sup>16</sup> Another writer concurred, marijuana leads to other drugs. "I, unlike many people, see the correlation between the use of marijuana and other addictive substances. I also see a tremendous correlation between crime in our community and drug use."<sup>17</sup> The chant is ceaseless and is taken as an indisputable fact: marijuana leads to the harder stuff.

Again appealing to authority, another editorial also claimed that

## Drug War Propaganda

marijuana leads children to hard drug use. All the scientists, the editorial asserted, tell us so: "Scientific literature shows that use of marijuana is a major risk factor in the development of addiction and drug use among our school children. . . . Of the nearly 182,000 kids in treatment today, 48 percent were admitted for abuse or addiction to marijuana while only 19.3 percent for alcohol and 2.9 percent for cocaine, 2.4 percent for methamphetamine, and 2.3 percent for heroin."<sup>18</sup> In a unique application of the gateway theory, the paper went on to link medical marijuana initiatives with increased hard drug addiction. "It is no coincidence that those states with medical marijuana initiatives have among the highest levels of drug use and drug addiction."<sup>19</sup> The editorial did not explain how the medical marijuana initiatives could affect rates of drug usage before the initiatives were written, voted upon, or enacted. Nonetheless, that marijuana is the "gateway" to addiction is beyond debate, we are assured.

"His love affair with drugs began at 14 when he smoked his first joint in the back seat of a Corvair, and continued through 33 years' worth of uppers, downers, LSD, peyote, mushrooms, cocaine and, finally, his favorite -- meth."<sup>20</sup> Marijuana leads to the harder stuff; such anecdotes, drug warriors swear, proves it.

The mantra is repeated: marijuana leads to the harder stuff: "pot is dangerous to a person's health, possibly leading to stronger drugs, and gives mixed messages to our youth. Long-term mental and physical health issues arise especially when the smoker decides pot is not enough anymore."<sup>21</sup> After enough repetitions, simply making reference to "the gateway drug" is sufficient. "[P]olice officers will counter a growing movement to decriminalize marijuana by making a public call today for possession of the 'gateway drug' to remain a criminal offence."<sup>22</sup> "Marijuana is internationally recognized as the gateway drug for other drug use," explained the police association. "Risk factors for marijuana dependency are similar to those for other forms of drug abuse and much higher than those for alcohol."<sup>23</sup>

Another writer also explained how marijuana leads to the harder stuff. "Fourth, marijuana is what I call a step drug. What this means is that it is not uncommon for a user to move on to a stronger drug because the desired affect is no longer found."<sup>24</sup> Our children, prohibitionists stress,

## Drug War Propaganda

are caught in this gateway of abuse."Brandy . . . 17, followed her curiosity and learned the hard way where drugs can lead. She tried marijuana for the first time as a freshman, only to wind up taking 30 to 40 prescription pills a day and flunking ninth grade."<sup>25</sup>

"Marijuana is a gateway drug that the legalizers are using in an attempt to legalize other illegal drugs," declared another editorial, repeating the "legalization gateway" variant of the "marijuana gateway" theme. As marijuana leads to the harder stuff, prohibitionists assert, so also the lessening of marijuana laws leads to "legalization" of all drugs. "Marijuana is merely the first step on the path to legalization."<sup>26</sup> Likewise, a writer from New York asserted that using cannabis would surely lead to the harder stuff. "Marijuana should never be legalized, it's nothing more than a starter drug for most addicts. It's also the starter drug in the legal arena, first marijuana then whatever drug the advocates can get legalized next."<sup>27</sup> Prohibitionists paint a picture where "drugs" -- certainly marijuana -- spontaneously arose from the 60s, while at the same time nurturing the perception that drugs have always been illegal (if not immoral), unless taken by a doctor's prescription. Since all drugs have always been illegal, the prohibitionist declares, if marijuana were to be "legalized", then the 'harder stuff' would be next.

Still, despite the chorus of government officials, authorities and experts singing in unison with editors across the globe that "marijuana will lead to the harder stuff," not everyone is convinced. "The gateway theory is deliberately ambiguous," obstinately observed one heretic, "and therefore impossible to disprove. It's not clear what it means to say that marijuana 'leads to' other drugs. For example, heroin use is usually preceded by marijuana use, but marijuana use is rarely followed by heroin use. . . . In short, the most useful thing that can be said about the gateway theory is that it's not very useful -- as a scientific concept, that is; it's very useful as a rhetorical device."<sup>28</sup>

### Marijuana Abuse

Prohibitionists assert that drugs have an irresistible, evil power. Another aspect of this idea is the claim that all use of drugs is *abuse*.

In general this strategy equates the use and abuse of drugs and implies that it is impossible to use the particular drug or drugs

## Drug War Propaganda

in question without physical, mental, and moral deterioration.<sup>29</sup>

In this theme, all use of a forbidden drug is labeled *abuse*. "The propagandist frequently tries to influence his audience by substituting favourable or unfavourable terms, with an emotional connotation, for neutral ones unsuitable to his purpose."<sup>30</sup> For example, concerning a rally to change the marijuana laws, one paper reported "event organizers had secured permits for use of the park, but police would not tolerate blatant drug abuse."<sup>31</sup> In other words, all use of marijuana would be considered "abuse", to make arrests seem more justified.

Apparently believing all use of cannabis to be abuse, a narcotics officers association argued against changes to the law that would make punishment less harsh for possessing small amounts of marijuana, because "if marijuana possession were reduced to an infraction it would make people ineligible for treatment."<sup>32</sup> An editor of another paper agreed: all use of marijuana is bad. "The scientific literature also shows that marijuana use is a major risk factor in the development of addiction and drug use among schoolchildren."<sup>33</sup>

All use of marijuana is "abuse"; papers proffer the testimonials of experts telling us so. "If you do not use it, then you cannot abuse it -- that is the in-your-face view of cannabis as detailed this week in Toowoomba by a leading brain expert. . . . He told students in Toowoomba this week that cannabis was not a soft, recreational drug that should be legitimised."<sup>34</sup> In other words, because to use cannabis is always to "abuse" it, adults must be jailed for using it. A new Swedish "low frequency laser-acupuncture treatment for cannabis users" was promised to "stop cannabis use", the provider and inventor of this treatment claimed.<sup>35</sup> All use is abuse. It must be, prohibitionists tell us, stopped at any cost.

One prohibitionist, the editor of a provincial newspaper, was asked a question. "We need you to ask the tough questions -- why is pot illegal?" Confident in the knowledge that all use of cannabis is abuse, the editor cleverly replied, "Why encourage more people to become drug users?"<sup>36</sup> "Marijuana Still Drug Of Choice," an headline reminded. The article admitted that marijuana is the main target of the war on drugs. Still, it was reported, police are suspicious that drug use was

## Drug War Propaganda

becoming more discreet: "There is a possibility that the number of drug cases can decrease as the number of drug users increases if the users are more covert in their practices."<sup>37</sup> All use is abuse editors, police and prosecutors sing in unison.

"Teens Hooked On Pot," screamed another headline. The report listed "SIGNS OF ADDICTION" suspicious parents should report to medical authorities. "Irritability, Feeling out of sorts, Conflict with others," was included as suspect teenage behavior, in combination with any use of cannabis.<sup>38</sup>

A bureaucrat, stating that "rates of addiction for cannabis" were like that of heroin, cited this as proof of the harms of marijuana: "It is adding further to the evidence that cannabis use is far from harmless."<sup>39</sup>

### Drug Abuse

The rhetoric of prohibition stresses that any use of the gateway drug of cannabis is "abuse." Still, this propaganda also emphasizes that all use of *any* drug is abuse, also. As has been seen before, the propagandist may drift from marijuana to "drugs", from use to "abuse" freely. This makes it easy for the propagandist to *transfer* the worst attributes of *any* drug, to whatever specific drug is targeted.

For example, an editor, labelling efforts at drug reform in his area as "retreat", was secure in the knowledge that all use of any forbidden drug is abuse. "Some jail or prison time should still be applied to convicted drug users -- along with mandatory treatment. . . . Just as alcoholics have support groups they attend the rest of their lives, drug users need a similar system."<sup>40</sup> Another report equated trying forbidden drugs with addiction: "I tell them I don't want them ever to try drugs . . . That's the most important thing - just don't ever pick them up. If you're an addict, you're going to like it and keep going back to it."<sup>41</sup> That is to say, all use is abuse.

Drug warriors are exalted for their ability to whip up public sentiment against "abusers" of "drugs." "What Bennett did do was turn the moral spotlight on so-called casual drug users. These individuals, who can readily stop their use, feed the illicit drug market and serve as role models: Their example implies one can enjoy intense drug euphoria

## Drug War Propaganda

without consequences while carrying on a normal life and stopping whenever one chooses."<sup>42</sup> All illicit drugs (a political distinction meaning *the drugs government will jail people for using*) are "drugs of abuse." One DEA publication declared "the physiological effects of drug abuse," destroyed people and nations.<sup>43</sup> No mention is made of responsible drug *use* as happens with alcohol, for example; the suggestion is that all use is abuse.

Abuse and use are used interchangeably; all use is abuse, the theme is pounded in. "For example, to estimate substance abuse costs in elementary and high school education, researchers considered the expenses caused by all abusers. Mothers who drink while pregnant and have children with fetal alcohol syndrome influence the costs of special education when those kids go to school. Student drug use affects the need for drug testing and health care, and drug-related violence might require more spending on security and repairs. Teachers who abuse substances can cost the state in productivity and health insurance."<sup>44</sup> When convenient, "abuse" is defined broadly.

All use is abuse writers say, over and over. "What needs to be done globally to turn the tide on drug use . . . Society needs to view drug use as offensive, destructive [and] to apply meaningful consequences to users, since most users coerce others into joining in this folly."<sup>45</sup> "Cadet Sentenced For Drug Use . . . If you're thinking about using drugs, don't. They've completely ruined my life."<sup>46</sup>

Since all use is abuse, prosecutors tell us, this is all the more reason prosecutors need to be given more power to fight this scourge. A "[p]rosecutor. . . asked the judge to sentence [a drug user] to five years in prison, to 'send a message' . . . 'It needs to be strong enough so they'll think twice about using and distributing drugs.'"<sup>47</sup> Another prosecutor revealed that abusers (anyone who uses any amount of any forbidden drug) would not receive mercy from the prosecutor, the mercy of forced treatment, unless the abuser did confess guilt and agree to repentance. "'One thing people should know is that this [forced treatment versus prison] hinges on the defendant acknowledging guilt and that they have a problem right off the bat,' said [the government prosecutor]."<sup>48</sup> Since the prosecutor/judge realizes that all use is abuse, for the "abuser" to insolently demand a traditional jury trial is an insult to the dignity of



## Drug War Propaganda

government that must be punished, de facto, all the more.

All use of any drug that produces good feelings must be abuse; after all, the drug produces good feelings. Is that not reason enough to consider all use of the drug to be abuse? "Ecstasy was originally prescribed by marriage counselors in the 1970s because of its supposed ability to bring out the warm and fuzzy feelings that couples had for each other (hence its nickname: 'the hug drug'). The federal government banned it in 1985 after discovering that it was becoming popular as a recreational drug and was potentially harmful if misused."<sup>49</sup>

Another paper described a progressive, forward-looking program to assume all use of any forbidden drug is addiction (i.e. abuse), and to "treat" such abusers. The drug "court . . . not only benefit[s] drug addicts but all Rhode Islanders preyed upon by addicts seeking money. They also said it is cheaper to treat than to incarcerate. . . . At the heart of the drug-court idea is a criticism of efforts to stop the flow of drugs into the United States. Saying such interdiction was failing, drug professionals urged reducing the demand for drugs by treating addicts."<sup>50</sup> All "drugs", the report told us, (if they are forbidden drugs), are used only by "addicts." (The report didn't mention any non-abusive use.) All use is abuse, authorities stress.

The headline read, "Combating Drug Use." (That is, "use.") The editorial began: "A private study has shown that the states spend about \$81.3 billion dealing with 'the wreckage' of substance abuse."<sup>51</sup> Use and abuse, authorities constantly assert, are one and the same.

A DARE officer was shocked that information was distributed which implied all use of a forbidden drug might not be abuse. The "D.A.R.E. officer of seven years . . . wasn't amused or impressed with certain Harm Reduction Coalition pamphlets. 'I cannot believe it. I'm totally amazed that people put that out . . . It's very misleading when they talk about cocaine increasing stamina and alertness. ' . . . she's aghast that anyone would suggest proper, safe or correct ways to administer illegal drugs. . . . 'I've never seen anyone use drugs correctly.'"<sup>52</sup> Since forbidden drugs are illegal, any use of such a drug must be bad, officials explain.

The top bureaucrat of the National Institute on Drug *Abuse* (the very

## Drug War Propaganda

name of which epitomizes the prohibitionist propaganda theme that *all use is abuse*) declared that all use of any drug designated as a "drug of abuse" would "change the brain, hijack its motivational systems and even change how its genes function."<sup>53</sup>

All drug "offenders" (that is to say, anyone testing positive for using any illegal drug at any time) are considered substance abusers. "The offender will go through a standardized drug treatment test by substance abuse providers. . . . An offender who is deemed appropriate for drug court must agree to plead guilty to the crime they are accused of."<sup>54</sup> (The "crime" obscured there will be possession of marijuana, in the majority of cases.) Court-ordered forced-treatment programs know that all use is abuse, also. "Those who work 12-step programs . . . abstain completely from drugs. Purists believe true recovery can only occur with total abstinence from all narcotics, and that methadone is merely replacing one drug with another."<sup>55</sup>

"New Take On Drugs," read the headline. "Drugs" are synonymous with abuse: "Despite almost four decades of intense law-enforcement efforts, drug abuse remains one of this nation's most disturbing problems."<sup>56</sup> If we're talking "drugs", authorities constantly remind, then we of course mean "abuse", for all use is abuse.

Watch as an editor slides from "marijuana use" to "abuse": "[A]lthough marijuana use by teens has seemed to decline, a frightening upswing has occurred in the number of young people experimenting with club drugs, such as methylenedioxy-methamphetamine, also known as Ecstasy. In the metropolitan Orlando area, drug abuse resulted in 85 deaths during the past two years."<sup>57</sup> Marijuana is conflated with MDMA. No matter: all use is abuse, anyway.

"The use of illegal drugs is probably the most serious problem facing America and most other nations," another editor declared (since all use is abuse). To combat "illegal drug trafficking and use" the editor prompted politicians "to urge the American people and others around the world not to use illegal drugs."<sup>58</sup> "Certainly," another editor asserted, "interdiction efforts are necessary to slow the flood of illegal drugs into the country as much as possible. But government can't do the whole job. Americans must refuse to tacitly accept drug use among

## Drug War Propaganda

peers and family members."<sup>59</sup> Why? Because all "drug use" is bad.

Another editorialist, in attempting to whip up support for more severe laws against drug users, also knew that "use" is to be equated with abuse. "[T]he real issue is reducing the use of drugs in the United States . . . the nation would be better off focusing on reducing demand at home rather than trying to restrict supply abroad."<sup>60</sup> Another editorial equated all "drug offenders" (mainly, for example, anyone testing positive for cannabis use) with "addicts." All use is abuse, experts repeat. "Non-violent drug offenders are given a chance to get free of their addictions, hold jobs, support families and essentially become productive members of society again. A team of law enforcement and judicial professionals, as well as social workers, substance abuse counselors and others oversees their rehabilitation."<sup>61</sup> The article did not mention that employed drug (cannabis) users often lose their jobs because of the drug laws, not because of effects of the drugs.

In column space given a prosecutor, the prosecutor argued for continued prosecutorial powers; this was merely to give users the treatment they deserved, it was explained. In justifying his selection of medical treatment for such patients, the government lawyer reasoned, "One of the main reasons those programs are so successful is that addicted offenders face mandatory prison time if they don't stay in treatment. Most felony drug offenders get probation for their first offense."<sup>62</sup> All "drug offenders" are "addicted" it is insinuated. All use is abuse. Therefore (prosecutors stress again and again) prosecutors deserve continued, if not greater powers. "There is a very easy way of not getting addicted to drugs - don't take them,"<sup>63</sup> stated another writer. If all abuse is use, reason prohibitionists, then all use must therefore be abuse.

"Opinions about whether drug use is a crime or a disease split along political lines," another paper revealed.<sup>64</sup> All use, experts declare, is either crime (a bad use), or disease (another bad use). All use, authorities tell us, is abuse.

Drug warrior apologists agree: all use of cannabis, for example, is in itself abuse. "Marijuana makes you stupid. The only reason to take these drugs, unlike alcohol, wine and beer, is to get blotto, to get

## Drug War Propaganda

stoned, to alter your consciousness," asserted former drug czar Bill Bennett.<sup>65</sup> It was not explained why alteration of consciousness was bad. Nonetheless, all use of any substance so scheduled by government experts, authorities, and officials, is "abuse." An article's title, "Trying To Get Users To Seek Treatment," implied that all "users" of drugs are drug abusers and thus need "treatment."<sup>66</sup> "And people who stop abusing drugs are also much more likely to stop committing crimes," nodded another editor in agreement.<sup>67</sup> All use of any forbidden drug is "abuse."

Another editorial declared that drug "abuse" destroyed lives; the next sentence elaborated on drug "use", equating use and abuse. "[D]rug abuse destroys the lives of more and more young people. And increasingly it is not just strangers, but our family and friends who are suffering. In recent times the political debate has become all too hard -- unlike drug use, which is sadly becoming all too easy."<sup>68</sup>

Another editor, safe in the realization of the prohibitionist theme that all use is abuse, declared that "Legalizing drugs won't work." The editor rhetorically questioned that, with restraint of prohibition gone, shall not the unwashed masses increase their use (which is of course, abuse)? "Will this lead to a higher usage by society, and if so will automotive accidents involving drivers under the influence of drugs increase?"<sup>69</sup> (The writer did not mention studies showing marijuana users were less likely to be at fault in accidents than non-users.<sup>70</sup>) One reporter recounted what we believe we know. "Today we understand that if you use certain chemicals, the odds are good that you will become an addict," it was declared (blending use and abuse). "We also understand that who will and who will not become an addict is totally unpredictable -- it's the luck of the draw."<sup>71</sup>

A writer, irked that another had distinguished between drug use and abuse, declared there was no such difference, because, "When a drug user is arrested for using illegal drugs and has been before the judge multiple times, wouldn't this suggest chronic abuse?"<sup>72</sup> All use of any forbidden drug is abuse. The writer continued, refusing to believe that prohibited substances could be compared to alcohol (which was once prohibited with similar results). "The relationship [drawn] between alcohol (which is legal) and drugs (which are illegal) makes no sense.

## **Drug War Propaganda**

The incorrigible alcoholics deserve to be behind bars if they break a law. So should a drug user."<sup>73</sup> All drug users, declare prohibitionists, are the same as incorrigible alcoholics who have broken a law. All use, therefore, is abuse.

In one politician's speech, the politician emphasized the prohibition theme that all use of a forbidden drug is abuse: "[D]edicated to reducing drug abuse", "Drug-Free Communities . . . Californians For Drug-Free Youth", "reduce illegal drug use in America", "drug use . . . was reduced every year. We had made tremendous strides in cutting drug use. . . . Drug use harms people of every economic class, but drug use is doing the most damage," . . . "drug-free communities" . . . "We must reduce drug use."<sup>74</sup> All use, politicians assure us, is abuse.

### **Gateway Drugs**

While marijuana may be considered "the" gateway drug, the propagandist needn't be so specific. Since "drugs" are bad, the prohibitionist can simply speak of "drugs" as leading to other "drugs."

For example, although the issue was medical marijuana, one concerned citizen activist saw an opportunity to speak out on where "illicit drugs" should surely lead: "marijuana and other illicit drugs lead to school violence, dropouts, early sexuality and teen-age pregnancy."<sup>75</sup> Another recounted an assortment of gateways. "When I was a kid, there were gateway drugs. You tried grass, and then you stopped, or you went to the next level, like cocaine. That was another gateway. You might quit then, after experimenting, or you might go on to heroin. There were ways out. Nowadays, I find kids going straight to coke. Or heroin. Or crack. I work with kids who don't drink or smoke marijuana -- but who use heroin."<sup>76</sup>

An Australian report discovered another gateway: tobacco. "Tobacco was the largest gateway drug in Australia," stated the report. "Almost 100 per cent of the people I deal with who are addicted to drugs were early smokers. . . . It is almost unheard of for a person to be using illicit drugs who hasn't been or is not a smoker."<sup>77</sup>

The same report went on to imply that parental smoking had caused the children's drug use. "Parents who smoke could influence their children

## Drug War Propaganda

towards future drug use, the Federal Government's drug advisory body said yesterday. . . . Another member, Major Brian Watters, said that although he didn't want to blame parents who smoked or make them feel guilty, there was a correlation between smoking in the home and drug-taking behaviours of children - legal and illegal."<sup>78</sup> Note again, the way that insinuation that the parent's tobacco use *causes* junior's drug use is made. Officials and paper are very careful never to claim that something *causes* something else: they seem to know better than that. However, the insinuation is made and we can be sure that the reader will get the message that daddy's cigarettes cause the child's drug use.

Another paper's report of the same government publicity event revealed a similar tacit understanding that one must never *explicitly* say one drug *causes* use of another: an insinuation will accomplish that leaving a comfortable margin of plausible deniability. "Illegal Drug Use Linked To Smoking," shouted the headline. Notice: "linked to", not "causes"; causality will be assumed in the reader's mind. "Council member Professor Wayne Hall said there were now some very worrying correlations between parents who smoked tobacco and the drug-taking behaviours of their children."<sup>79</sup> Notice: "correlations", not causality. Mr. Hall knows better than to actually say that tobacco causes this or that.

Another report spun the heart-rending tale of an abuser's progress. "Harley's experiences with drugs started during a Thanksgiving dinner when he was only 8 years old. His parents let him drink some wine. . . . Harley was 12 when he first tried LSD and was getting drunk at least monthly. At 14 he had his first experience with marijuana and pot soon became a weekly, if not a daily, drug of choice. He soon started doing various hallucinogenic drugs, left home at 15, and started dealing drugs to his acquaintances in high school." Harvey progresses through gateway after gateway. "He dropped out of school half way through his senior year. By then he had already experienced amphetamines, or cross tops, as he called them."<sup>80</sup> The initial gateway which led to the life of drug-ruin was alcohol in this case. The report did not call for the prohibition of alcohol. Another paper similarly described the gateway of liquor: "Hollar, 38, had been jailed twice before, with no lasting impact on his behavior. A self-described 'lifelong criminal,' he took his first drink at age 8, his first puff of marijuana at 12, his first heroin

## Drug War Propaganda

injection at 16."<sup>81</sup>

An editorialist described the gateway of LSD. "At 21 I took my first LSD trip, at a nightclub. . . . About five years later, I shared my first ecstasy pill. Meanwhile, others were experimenting with speed, cocaine and heroin."<sup>82</sup>

Another paper reported of the Xanax gateway. "[P]roblems started 12 years ago when a psychiatrist prescribed the sedative Xanax for her severe panic attacks. She liked the way they made her feel -- calm, in control, self-confident. . . . [Later, downing] up to 20 pills a day, she tried to give them up but turned to alcohol to combat the withdrawal."<sup>83</sup>

*Any* tickle or stimulation opens the gateway to abuse, explained another writer: "Once we tickle or stimulate that part of the brain we are open to other forms of titillation. If you ask any crack user, heroin addict, alcoholic or pill popper how they started, most will tell you the same story. It was fun in the beginning, something to do."<sup>84</sup>

### Summary

Prohibitionist rhetoric says that drugs targeted for prohibition (or drugs whose *users* are targeted for increased punishments), are *gateway* drugs that cause users to take other, more harmful drugs.

Chief among the "gateway" drugs is cannabis. The "gateway" or "stepping-stone" of marijuana, say prohibitionists, has the property of causing child and adult to crave heroin, cocaine, or other hard drugs, once marijuana has been tasted.

Drug war propaganda continually seeks to reinforce the idea that some "drugs" (declared by politicians to be sinful) can never be properly used; they can only be abused. Thus, asserts the prohibition propagandist, all use of any forbidden drug is abuse.

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Saving Our Children

*GIRL, 11, ABDUCTED, FORCED TO BECOME  
PROSTITUTE . . . GIVEN DRUGS TO KEEP HER  
WORKING STREETS 12 HOURS A DAY*

-- newspaper headline<sup>1</sup>

Yet another way for the prohibitionist to vilify forbidden drugs is to link their use to the corruption of children. The moral and sexual corruption of children is a constant theme in the propaganda of prohibition.

Chemicals have long been inextricably linked in prohibitionist literature with the sexual corruption of young people. . . . The inflaming of this fear about the fate of our own children made it difficult if not impossible for most Americans to take a careful and reasoned look at our drug policies.<sup>2</sup>

Since the theme of marijuana as "the gateway drug" is so heavily promoted, the prohibitionist will frequently assert marijuana use will corrupt children, leading them into debauched lives of moral and sexual degradation. It is a good place to begin to examine the ways the rhetoric of prohibition tells us our children are corrupted by drugs.

### Marijuana Corrupting Children

One column told of the insidious dangers of medical marijuana. Surely, it was claimed, this was a ruse for corrupting children into pot users. "Medical marijuana is a way to persuade the public that pot is benign. It's also great for getting kids hooked. If adults tell them that marijuana helps cancer patients, how bad can it be? 'Just say no to medicine' is not an effective slogan."<sup>3</sup> Our children will be corrupted if we don't lock up marijuana-taking cancer patients because our children will then learn that marijuana cannot be so bad. In order to preserve the effectiveness

## Drug War Propaganda

of the "just say no" slogan, prohibitionists declare, adults must be jailed. The lack of appeal to the kids of other chemotherapy drugs taken by cancer patients was not mentioned. A perceived epidemic of cannabis-corrupted children, was mentioned, however: "An increase in juvenile pot use has coincided with the medical marijuana campaign. The number of eighth-graders who'd used marijuana at least once went from 10.2 percent in 1991 to 20.3 percent in 2000."<sup>4</sup> Cannabis consuming cancer patients are the cause, it is insinuated.

Cannabis corrupts the children early in life, one paper explained. If you can get the 19-year-olds, it was said, then government can help more. "If you can get hold of 19-year-olds just as they're developing their drug problems and assist them with rehabilitation, it's going to be far more effective than waiting until they're 26 when they've become hardened criminals and are going to jail for the third time. . . . marijuana and amphetamines, not heroin, were the most prevalent drugs on the Coast."<sup>5</sup>

Another paper revealed that cannabis dealers were corrupting the children, leading them astray as the Pied Piper led rats to their doom. "Drug Sellers Targeted Teenagers, Jury Told . . . A drug group which ran a string of cannabis-dealing 'tinny houses' in central Christchurch operated in a way which targeted teenagers as well as adult cannabis smokers . . . 'The prosecution says that was to capture the young market who couldn't afford to buy a tinny for \$20' . . . The police operation to catch the group was dubbed Operation Rat, a play on the Pied Piper of Hamelin fable . . ."<sup>6</sup>

A Texas paper recounted a mother's horror: a marijuana seller plying her daughter with cash and cannabis. "The dealer had picked up her 13-year-old daughter outside school and supplied the girl with all of the marijuana and money she wanted until her parents figured out what was going on. The daughter now is in another school, but the angry mother contends the drug dealer still cruises the area."<sup>7</sup>

Cannabis, it is said, is the assassin of youth, corrupting the children. "At yesterday's forum, Brother Pat Lynch from the Catholic Education Office spoke against any law reform. He said New Zealand must not descend into a 'cannabis fog' that would rob its young people of their

## Drug War Propaganda

health and wellbeing."<sup>8</sup> If adults are not jailed for using cannabis, the good brother informs us, then the children shall sink into a marijuana haze. Similarly, another writer scripted scenarios of cannabis-intoxicated school children, should adults not be jailed for using it. "He should find out how acceptable, in an open drug culture, it would be to have stoned children in attendance at school and other learning institutions. I don't think that parents, teachers or school authorities will take this on board."<sup>9</sup> The writer did not mention that children in his area have abundant access to cannabis on the black market.

Another paper insinuated marijuana is the cause of juvenile crime. "Marijuana was detected in nearly half of Maryland juveniles detained for trial . . . Results of the study, analyzed by Maryland's Drug Early Warning System (DEWS), appear to support what law enforcement and public health authorities have indicated in recent years were signs that marijuana had become the leading drug of choice among juvenile offenders."<sup>10</sup> Because prohibition is ineffective in keeping cannabis from corrupting the children, experts stress, this is a reason to strengthen prohibition.

One editor saw unacceptable catatonic behavior on the part of children, should adults not be imprisoned for using cannabis. Otherwise "a teenager staring endlessly at a light bulb" from marijuana use could happen. "[Y]ou have to keep chemicals out of the hands of children. It wrecks their lives before they even live them."<sup>11</sup>

"Teens Hooked On Pot," screamed one headline. "A six-year survey of 2000 teenagers found almost 40 per cent had experimented with the drug before leaving school," the paper reported breathlessly. The progressive corruption of youth was revealed: "By 20, one in 12 were using cannabis every day."<sup>12</sup> The "director of the Centre for Adolescent Health," (which receives greater funding the greater the perceived adolescent cannabis problem is said to be) declared the "higher than expected" rates of cannabis use had "scotched the belief marijuana was not as addictive as alcohol or heroin."<sup>13</sup> The paper did not, however, explain how imprisoning adults for using cannabis helped the situation.

Concerned that prosecutors were not getting their fair share of money, prosecutors warned of the dangers of child drug smugglers. "Authorities

## Drug War Propaganda

have reported that the number of juveniles who smuggle drugs across the border has grown since 1999."<sup>14</sup> (The article also let slip that the war on "drugs" is actually a war on people involved with cannabis: "About 95 percent of the federal drug cases involved marijuana."<sup>15</sup>) Regarding a governmental report on "drug and substance abuse," (reinforcing the theme that all use is abuse), an Irish paper reported that a quarter of the youth surveyed in one county regularly admitted they use marijuana weekly.<sup>16</sup>

"All the kids -- we have all these teenagers that are in drug rehab," one Republican political consultant remarked on television. "More of them are in there for addiction to pot than they are to alcohol."<sup>17</sup> Because our children have been corrupted by forbidden drugs, the pitchman proclaims, this is reason why adults must always be punished for using them, this is reason why government must never regulate drugs as whiskey is regulated.

"Drug Use Increases In Younger Kids," proclaimed another headline. Officials found that "sixth-graders had smoked three times as much marijuana in a month as the state average. Eighth-graders smoked marijuana about 11 times in a month," it was claimed. The prosecutor expressed her concern for the children. "More younger kids are abusing drugs," declared the prosecutor. "I'm seeing 11- and 12-year-olds."<sup>18</sup> Government officials agree: marijuana is corrupting our children.

"Ask [those with a vested interest in treatment industry] about marijuana use in children," complained a former drug czar. Cannabis corrupts children, says the czar. "They will assert that one of the primary causes for admission to drug treatment in this country for adolescents is marijuana. It is not a benign substance, in particular for adolescents. When you find a 12-year-old smoking pot on weekends and binge-drinking beer and smoking cigarettes, you're looking at someone who's 85 percent more likely-85 times more likely to use cocaine. This is not behavior that we want our young people doing."<sup>19</sup> The former czar left off explaining how jailing adults for using cannabis could ever prevent child cannabis use. Jail is euphemized: forgotten.

"Younger Generation At Stake In War on Drugs," revealed an editor. Drugs, the editor said, were corrupting the children. "When it comes to

## Drug War Propaganda

the war on drugs, our schools are on the front lines," cried the editorial, stepping up the war metaphors. "Parents," (but mostly government), "teachers, school administrators, guidance counselors and various organizations are fighting to keep youths from becoming addicts every day."<sup>20</sup> An administrator, the article continued, who's budget depends on increasing the number of youth in the treatment system, warned "parents about how drugs are becoming more powerful and are affecting students at younger ages." Cannabis, as usual, was seen to be the child corrupter. "Marijuana use, for example, used to be something that occurred in a student's late high school or early college years. Now, middle school students are trying marijuana and many are becoming addicts." Our children, treatment industry representatives claim, are marijuana addicts. "Furthermore, the marijuana available in today's drug market is much more potent than previous generations of the drug. It delivers a much more intense high and is even more addictive."<sup>21</sup> The treatment industry representative did not mention hashish, a traditional concentrated cannabis product available in the US and abroad.

Marijuana, we are told, corrupts the children, leading them into lives of crime. "[S]he started to use marijuana and alcohol at 15 . . . At 17, she moved on to cocaine and club drugs, such as ecstasy, and eventually heroin. Her drug use led to crime . . . 'I was 30 pounds underweight, I was addicted to cocaine and I was on probation.'"<sup>22</sup>

One paper, exhorting parents to, "'Take Five' To Fight Drugs," urged them to speak to children about marijuana. Some talking points were offered. "12-14 Years Old . . . Nearly nine out of 10 teens agree that 'it seems like marijuana is everywhere these days.'" Parents were asked to "[t]ake advantage of a teen's concerns about social image and appearance," to smoothly segue into stressing, "immediate, distasteful consequences of tobacco and marijuana use: bad breath, stained teeth, and smelly hair and clothes." Not surprisingly, parents were then requested to conflate marijuana into *drugs*. "Point out that drug use is not only dangerous, but also can lead to broken friendships, even prison. Point out long-term consequences, such as brain damage, cancer, and the potential for accidents, coma or death."<sup>23</sup>

"Youth Drug Arrests Soaring," trumpeted another paper. "Some of the youths started using drugs as early as the ages of 6 or 7 . . . Take Randy

## **Drug War Propaganda**

. . . The 14-year-old was 12 when he started drinking alcohol and smoking marijuana. . . . he worked up to daily marijuana use." Marijuana is the assassin of youth, it is implied. "Rade . . . was about 10 years old when he began smoking marijuana. He then discovered cocaine and was smoking it nearly every day when he was arrested for possessing drugs on school grounds."<sup>24</sup> Government, we are told, must do something because children are being corrupted with marijuana.

### **Dance Drugs Corrupting Children**

Dance drugs, prohibitionists assert, are corrupting our children. Our children are enticed into the drug culture through pulsating techno music, swirling lights, deadly dance floors. The government must therefore do something. (Which usually means increasing penalties for drug users.) It is possible to find many examples of this in modern prohibitionist propaganda.

### **MDMA Killing Our Children**

The recent rhetoric of prohibition is replete with examples of "dance drugs" (MDMA, GHB, etc.) corrupting the children, sometimes even killing them outright. Though it is arguable whether or not such deaths should happen at all, were the substances not prohibited (and thus unregulated), papers instead are fond of emphasizing other aspects of such events.

"Ecstasy's Lure Masks Danger," an anxious headline read. Like fish to be hooked, our children are lured into the trap. "The drug . . . killed [a] Jefferson High School student . . . making his the first death known to be ecstasy-related in the state." Another child corrupted, consumed by the monster MDMA. "Although dying from the drug is uncommon, drug prevention counselors and law enforcement officials say this tragedy should be a wake-up call to the community that the colorful pills that bring on the warm-and-fuzzies can be very dangerous. It also can come mixed with other lethal substances. They've been fighting the euphoric allure that is drawing a growing number of young people to ecstasy. 'You don't know what you're getting or how you're going to react to the drug,' said [one government official], a drug and alcohol counselor for DePaul Treatment Centers' youth outpatient program in Portland. 'That's the scary part about it.'"<sup>25</sup> The "euphoric allure" of



## Drug War Propaganda

MDMA is corrupting our children, authorities scarily stress; is not the solution to this assassin of youth more government power?

"Awash In Ecstasy; Club Drug From Overseas Increasingly Found In Local Schools," reported another paper. The corruption of youth is stressed: "It takes two minutes to find a student on a . . . high-school campus who knows all about ecstasy. . . . a teenage user who can flip open a cell phone and get the illegal pills as easily as ordering a pizza. 'If you can get pot, you can get E,' one . . . athlete said."<sup>26</sup> A prosecutor was quoted telling of the dangers to the children from MDMA: "The kids are using it at house parties and weekend parties."<sup>27</sup>

Dance drugs, they are corrupting children, insist government narcotics police: "[I]n 2000, the DEA seized more than 3 million tablets of Ecstasy -- a 200 percent increase from the previous year. 'Parents send their kids to what they think are non-alcoholic dance parties,' says [one] DEA spokesman. . . 'And they're leaving in body bags.'"<sup>28</sup> Our children (warn government secret police agents with bloated "drug fighting" budgets) are slyly corrupted, nay, slaughtered, by the insidious dangers of dance drugs.

Another paper, another report of the children's access to MDMA. "Drug Use Not Rare, Say Monarch Students . . . Students at Monarch High aren't buying the claim by an administrator that the drug Ecstasy is a virtual stranger at the school. 'Oh yeah, right,' scoffed Jenifer Janicki, 17, a junior. 'Probably everybody I know has someone they know who does it.' . . . [the] high school was reeling Tuesday, a day after many learned that Brittney Chambers, a Monarch ninth-grader last year, was in a coma after taking Ecstasy at her 16th birthday party."<sup>29</sup>

"Teens At Risk," read the headline of another editorial. In classic form, the editor tells of the deadly dangers of booze, sex and dance drugs: "The death of 14-year-old Nia Coleman from a combination of drugs, alcohol and sex reminds us that, although everybody's focused on school shootings right now, alcohol, drugs and risky behavior continue to wreak carnage among teen-agers today."<sup>30</sup> Although the teen's body is dumped in a local park -- indicative of foul play, leading one to consider murder as a possibility -- the editorialist instead chooses to sermonize on "sex." "[The] student, found dead in a park earlier this

## Drug War Propaganda

year, had a combination of alcohol and the drug GHB in her blood stream. She also had sex the night she died. Mixing alcohol and GHB is extremely dangerous, and can lead to respiratory failure. The examiner's report said the drugs, alcohol and sex may have contributed to sudden cardiopulmonary arrest."<sup>31</sup> The possibility that the young lady was an unwilling victim of a murder/rape is not mentioned. Rather, we are reminded that dance drugs are associated with risky teen sex. And death.

### Children Consume Fake MDMA

Not only are our children corrupted and killed by real dance drugs, they are also victims of the fake stuff, too. On top of that, assert government officials, our children are targeted through abuse of appealing children's cartoon characters. "Ecstasy Found In Pokemon Stamp," warned one headline. The child-corrupting wickedness was revealed: the plot used cartoon characters as drug couriers. "A particularly dangerous version of the street drug Ecstasy has been appearing in the innocent guise of a Pokemon cartoon character, police say." Mingled were several deadly drugs, authorities warned. "Ecstasy pills laced with the drug PCP and stamped with the Pikachu character have been confiscated . . . Police say some of the pills contain a mixture of the hallucinogen Ecstasy and PCP, which can produce violent, dangerous hallucinations. Other pills contain only PCP, also known as angel dust or phencyclidine."<sup>32</sup> Police speculated "the Pikachu character, a children's favorite, was being used to market the drug to younger users."<sup>33</sup>

Police stress that children don't know what they're taking: "Kids will eat this stuff up without knowing what it is."<sup>34</sup> The children are corrupted: not by MDMA, but by what they *thought* was MDMA. Our children, say experts and authorities, are threatened by fake dance drugs, as well as the real stuff. "The so-called 'designer drug' ecstasy is easy to find in Ottawa, but sometimes what teens pay for isn't what they get. Autopsy results in the death of Tina . . . are expected today. . . . Louise Logue, Ottawa police youth intervention co-ordinator, said dealers peddling the illicit party drug are sometimes passing off much more dangerous substances such as PCP -- even unwittingly. 'The dealers are selling stuff they don't know is real or not and the kids don't know, especially the first-time users,' she said."<sup>35</sup>

## **Drug War Propaganda**

### **MDMA -- Child Fiends**

That our children are dropping like flies from fake MDMA is bad enough. Officials remind us, however, that our children are becoming MDMA addicts.

"Ecstasy Use Among US Youth Climbs," an alarmed headline revealed. The kids are becoming MDMA "junkies." "Former Ecstasy junkies, part of the rising trend of pill-popping US teenagers, told the US Congress Wednesday that ignorance was one of the contributing factors to their addiction. 'We all just wanted to have a good time, until it was over and people weren't waking up,' said Vinnie, a teenage boy . . ." Our youth, it was reported, are strung out on MDMA. Government must therefore do something. "Ecstasy ... was my quick way into a world where I wouldn't feel pain' . . . he first tried the so-called 'hug-drug' when he was 15."<sup>36</sup> Our children are becoming MDMA addicts, we are told. "US youth [are taking MDMA] popularly referred to as a 'club drug' because it is normally taken at all-night dance parties. . . . 'Ecstasy was introduced to me from a former boyfriend,' said Michelle, another recovering drug user. . . . 'What my boyfriend did not tell me was that I would want to take Ecstasy all the time. After a while, I felt as though I would not be able to live without it,' she said, detailing how she stole to support her usage."<sup>37</sup> All fun and games at first, MDMA hooks the child (it is explained), turning them into MDMA fiends.

Another report, another child addicted to the scourge of MDMA. "When Michelle C. was 15 years old, she discovered something that made her feel great for a few hours. When she took Ecstasy, Michelle had no inhibitions. . . . She also, it turned out, had no control. She wanted to feel that way all the time. She began to steal from her parents and cut classes to get high."<sup>38</sup> Our children, sing experts officials and authorities, are corrupted by ecstasy: they are changed into fiends.

### **MDMA Ratchet Up Adult Jail to Save Children**

Because of the terrible corruption of children who take MDMA, governments must always increase penalties for adult users. Otherwise, officials and authorities tell us, the children will continue to be corrupted. Urgent action must be taken; it is an "emergency."

## Drug War Propaganda

"Longer Sentences Sought For Ecstasy Traffickers," read the headline of an article in a New York paper; to save the children, is the familiar rationale given. "The commission, which sets sentencing guidelines for federal judges, has been pressured by Congress to stiffen penalties for trafficking in Ecstasy, which has gained popularity among teenagers at nightclubs and at all-night dance parties known as raves."<sup>39</sup> Because, government assures us, teenagers have used black market MDMA (the only variety of MDMA that exists under prohibition), adults must be punished ever more harshly. After all, the "emergency", government reminds us, requires action: "The commission's action today was an 'emergency amendment' to its guidelines; it has until May 1 to submit a proposal to Congress, which could make the change permanent."<sup>40</sup>

"Time To Get Serious About Ecstasy," another paper's headline revealed; apparently lengthy prison terms for possessing small amounts of the drugs were not considered "serious" enough. The "drug culture", a politician explained in column space given him, was outpacing government, causing crisis. "Yet state law has failed to keep up with the drug culture. While selling and possessing ecstasy is a violation of state law, it is currently a Schedule I controlled substance, thus only allowing prosecutors to file charges of possession with intent to distribute."<sup>41</sup> Prosecutors, the politician declared, were hamstrung. The threat to "our young people", the politician elaborated, called for action. "It's time we got serious about addressing this dangerous threat to the young people of Missouri," exclaimed the politician. The legislature was only jesting before, but now they shall get "serious", in order to save the young people. As always, sparing children from the drug culture requires more government power; locking up more adults.

"A recent tragedy in St. Louis was yet the most recent reminder of the dangers of the club drug popularly known as ecstasy." The politician continued. "There, five young men ranging in age from 19 to 21 were found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning inside a car parked in a closed garage. The ignition was still on and the car was out of gas,"<sup>42</sup> the politician cried. After relating a list of MDMA woes, it was reminded readers that protecting children from corruption was the concern of the government: "women who take the drug during pregnancy can damage their child's ability to learn"<sup>43</sup>

## **Drug War Propaganda**

### **MDMA Corrupting Our Children**

Use of dance drugs, experts warn, isn't limited to teens and adults: there is an 'epidemic' of younger children using dance drugs, as well. As always, we will find that the government's ready-made solution to the problem is of course, more governmental power.

"Young users," began the report: our children. "What's most worrisome, say officials, is that younger and younger Americans are trying it. . . . A University of Michigan survey conducted last year indicates that 1.3 million of the nation's students in grades eight through 12 have tried ecstasy at least once and that almost 450,000 students currently use it."<sup>44</sup> Young kids, authorities repeat, are corrupted by MDMA.

"STATE MOVES TO COMBAT PARTY DRUG," shouted another headline. The younger the users of ecstasy, the more sensational. Broad, inclusive age ranges make it seem as if younger and younger children are hooked: "Most users of ecstasy are said to be between 12 and 24 years old," the paper explained. "Authorities are gearing up to fight the youth party drug, ecstasy, fearing that its use is poised to skyrocket in Iowa."<sup>45</sup> This assassin also, is poised to mow down our children with drug-corruption. Something must be done. "A six-state task force that combats methamphetamine is shifting its focus to include club drugs, such as ecstasy," a government prosecutor proclaimed. Another bureaucrat declared, "drug informants and young people increasingly report encountering ecstasy around the state."<sup>46</sup> When explaining the need for police actions against citizens, alluding to the corruption of children is mandatory.

"Glitter Hides Dark Side Of Young Drug Users," ominously warned a Florida paper. The children, it was said, were at risk of sex and dance drugs. "[T]he city also has a high rate of teenage heroin use, and government officials and drug counselors say the area has also been struggling with the rising popularity of club drugs like Ecstasy, taken in pill form, and GHB, a liquid sedative." . . . Nearly 40 of every 1,000 girls 15 through 17 in the county become pregnant compared with 35 statewide and 32 nationwide"<sup>47</sup>

### **MDMA and Meth corrupting the Children**

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Authorities, ever vigilant to protect children from corruption, say that MDMA and methamphetamines laboratories are harming the children. "Clandestine labs that produce trendy party drugs such as Ecstasy and methamphetamine are flourishing . . . sales have increased as the popularity of the tablets has grown among youth."<sup>48</sup>

Another paper reported of the dangers to the children from Ecstasy and Meth. "The number of youths turning to two dangerously addictive drugs, new to the area, has increased sharply in . . . over the last few months. . . [the] Youth Resource Centre . . . counsels youth and can refer them for addiction help, is having to deal with up to 50 young people on a busy night. Most are aged between 15 and 18 and some simply never return after a few visits."<sup>49</sup> True to the theme of this section, the (often sexual) corruption of children by drugs, a nod is made to the idea of "date-rape" drugs. "The latest drugs making inroads are crystal meths (crystal methamphetamine) and GHB (gamma hydroxy butyrate), also becoming known as an alternative 'date rape' drug." . . . "Most of the young people are experimenting because these drugs are new to the area and they want to try them out, but these are serious, dangerous drugs and they are really seriously impairing the way that youth are living."<sup>50</sup>

Ecstasy and amphetamines were likewise blamed for corrupting children in Australia. "This trickery and treachery takes far too many good young people out of society's loop," another paper scolded. "Drugs rob them of their decency and their will to pursue better things. . . drug overdoses in public places are just one symptom of the malaise caused by amphetamines, ecstasy and other 'recreational' drugs. Most of the symptoms are hidden in the disintegration of young minds, in the anxiety of parents and in the fear of shopkeepers facing crazed young bandits."<sup>51</sup>

### **Amphetamines Corrupting Children**

Ecstasy is not the only hard drugs danger threatening to corrupt our children, authorities stress. Amphetamines are destroying our youth, officials and experts increasingly tell us. What is indicated say police, prosecutor and politician, is more power for government. Citizens, we are told, have too many rights; children are thus ruined.

## Drug War Propaganda

### Meth Lab Children

A paper reported on the lurking meth lab dangers. The children, experts agree, are at risk. "Imagine this scenario -- You're sitting in a chair in your new living room, watching your 1-year-old crawl around on the floor, playing with his toys. Meanwhile, his 3-year-old sister runs down the hallway toward her room, dragging her hands along the walls. You are unaware that the previous residents used the kitchen to cook the dangerous, highly addictive drug methamphetamine. . . . Each time your 1-year-old puts his hands on the carpet and then to his mouth, he may ingest some of the meth. The same goes for the 3-year-old girl or anyone else touching the walls."<sup>52</sup> Another paper told of meth threats to toddlers: The Meth Explosion . . . At this lab, chemicals used to make methamphetamine were kept where a toddler inside could get at them, agents said."<sup>53</sup>

Another paper emphasized also the amphetamine lab danger to children: "Methamphetamine Labs . . . In 1999, more meth labs were seized in California than in any other state. During those seizures, children were present 20% of the time. The percentage is expected to double the next year."<sup>54</sup> No mention is made of the lack of such dangers to children involved in the manufacture of legal drugs like Ritalin or Dexedrine.

"Meth Lab Children: The Unexpected Drug Victims," another paper reported. "Report Says More Than Half The Kids At Home Factories Test Positive For Chemicals. . . More than half the 54 children found during Orange County drug lab busts in 1999 have tested positive for chemical exposure, according to the county's first methamphetamine (government) task force report."<sup>55</sup> The alarmist article continued. "The finding is a striking example of the harm the county's methamphetamine trade can cause children," declared one government official and activist who's budget depends on stressing the 'crisis.'<sup>56</sup>

"Senate Bill Would Give Kids Meth Protection," another headline proclaimed. Of course, the "solution" to the crisis of meth-lab corrupted children, is more government power. This is needed, officials say, to save the children. "The Iowa Senate voted Tuesday to protect children who are exposed to methamphetamine makers. Under legislation

## Drug War Propaganda

approved 48-0, state officials could move to protect a child when meth is made in their presence, or close enough for 'dangerous substances' to be seen or smelled. The state would have the authority to designate the child as a Child in Need of Assistance and, in some cases, remove them from the home. . . . The measure is part of a package of child protection bills proposed by Attorney General Tom Miller."<sup>57</sup> As is often the case, laws giving government prosecutors more power over citizens are written by the prosecutors themselves. We needn't worry; it is all for the good of the children.

Although experts and authorities warn of the dangers to the children of makeshift meth labs, it is admitted they have no idea what, if any, effects home meth manufacture has on children. "The data that's missing is what the exposure to infants, pregnant women, the toddler crawling around on the floor who's exposed - we don't have (toxicology) data for meth," confessed one expert.<sup>58</sup>

### Parent, Child Meth

Not only is methamphetamine moonshining corrupting children, meth-using moms and dads are harming children, government insists. "The Meth Explosion," blasted another headline. Users of methamphetamines, we are reminded, are dangers to children. "[Meth dealers] also often the homes of young children."<sup>59</sup> Police actions against adults are portrayed as saving the children.

And of course, the children themselves are directly corrupted by the deadly scourge of illegal amphetamines, authorities repeat. (The legal amphetamines like Dexedrine and stimulants like Ritalin that government forces insufficiently subservient children to take, well now, that's very *different*, you see.) Consider, one paper suggested, these anecdotes: "'Suzy' was a nice girl. Her genial personality and girl-next-door looks belied the fact she had once been a methamphetamine abuser. . . . Suzy was just one of many people in that community who had fallen into the grips of meth."<sup>60</sup>

"Social Workers Pin Hopes On State," was the headline's subtext. The story, which well captures the tenor of such "meth freaks hurt children" pieces, revealed terrible scenes of meth-induced child abuse to bolster the governmental request for more money and power: "There was the



## Drug War Propaganda

baby left in the trash bag. The little girl raped after her first birthday. And the tortured 7-month-old, her tiny face pocked by cockroach and rat bites, and her body riddled with bedsores so infected that doctors had to remove part of her leg. . . . All the parents used meth."<sup>61</sup> The experts' plea, in order to save the children from such corruption, is for more government: "overwhelmed social service and law enforcement agencies already spread thin over vast expanses and unequipped to cope with the problem, experts say." Social workers are portrayed as soldiers on the front lines of saving the children from this horrible scourge. "Social workers, sometimes wearing bulletproof vests, spend their days rescuing children from reeking meth labs and hollow-eyed parents."<sup>62</sup> To save children from meth, what's needed is more government, government experts and officials declare.

Continuing, a parade of similar heinous anecdotes is presented as reason for more government powers: "The . . . wake-up call came in 1991 when five children died in the homes of meth users. . . . Past cases still haunt her. There was the gaunt addict with missing teeth, who had five children by age 23. Her youngest died in a filthy trailer after the mother didn't take the sick infant to the doctor. A woman who went on a meth binge at a friend's trailer fell into a coma-like state and suffocated, crushing her infant to death on the couch. One man kept his girlfriend prisoner in the desert, repeatedly raping her and molesting her young daughters."<sup>63</sup> Trust our scary stories, officials say, as they beg for more money and control. "Program to Aid Children Lacks Funds," the report predictably concluded. More fearful scenes were displayed as reason. "Before the program began, children who were found in squalid homes filled with the toxic makings of meth, syringes and loaded guns were not always considered victims," the report asserted. The local prosecutor's touching concern for children was added: "What I'd see would make me want to get home as quickly as possible and hug my kids," choked the government prosecutor. "In a sentence, what this program does is save children's lives."<sup>64</sup> All the money we ask for, say prosecutors, all the new laws we write and pass: it is all for the children, to save the children from the horrible ravages of *illegal* amphetamines.

Not yet satisfied with the emotional temperature, the report went on with still more vistas of kiddy meth corruption: exactly "1,052 children were found living in meth labs in the seven counties targeted by the

## Drug War Propaganda

program. After the program ran out of funds [the governor] vetoed a bill that would have provided more money, saying he wanted an evaluation of the task force's performance. . . . 'We went through our period of crack babies and we've seen what happened to those little infants with learning disabilities and education problems,' said [a government official with interest in increased funding]. 'These children are going to be a real drain on the educational system, health-care and child-care system. We don't know what's going to happen with these meth babies.'"<sup>65</sup> Because of the meth-user's abject squalor and (the government says) misery and death and general corruption of children, government needs more money and power to *save* the children.

### Opiates, Opioids Corrupting Children

Opiates are drugs derived from the opium poppy, such as raw opium, codeine, morphine, heroin, and methadone. Similarly, *opioids* are synthetic analogues of opiates such as oxycodone: Percodan, Percocet, OxyContin, and so on. The propaganda of prohibition counts them as great corrupters of adult and child alike.

"Heroin Can Strike Even 'Normal' Families," read the slug. A mother's warning followed. Heroin is hooking and hurting the children. "Normal people can have children who are addicted to drugs - even heroin. . . . [government statistics] show one-third of all high school seniors say it's easy for them to buy heroin, quite possibly at school. . . . she does have a question: 'Why are our kids killing themselves for a few minutes of being high?'"<sup>66</sup>

A New England paper reported of the scourge besetting our children, the scourge of heroin. "Users now come as young as 15 and the city has experienced a wave of crime - burglaries and bad checks -- that police attribute to addicts getting quick cash for a fix."<sup>67</sup> "\$12.5M For Local Action On Heroin," an Australian paper announced. "In the local drug strategy we particularly felt the need to target the public housing estates, young people who are at risk and people from multicultural backgrounds," declared an official of the intended target for government heroin help.<sup>68</sup>

In rural Appalachia, officials report an "epidemic" of the scourge of high-potency oxycodone tablets known by the trade name "OxyContin."

## Drug War Propaganda

"Illegal Sale, Use Of a Painkiller Alarms Officials," a pliant press reported. This synthetic opioid was killing our children, police said. "State police said that children as young as 10 are using the drug -- a boy was caught recently snorting a crushed pill -- and that many teenagers are found with pill-crushers that allow them to break open the time-release OxyContin tablets for a quick and powerful high. 'It's not too early to introduce seventh- and eighth-graders to this type of information because police are seeing increasingly young people, even young teenagers, carrying personal pill crushers in southwest Virginia,' [said one government official]. 'We need to attack the problem.'"<sup>69</sup> Attacking "the problem" will predictably involve new laws; more power for government officials.

"Orphans Of The Drug Epidemic," wailed a headline hailing from Iran. The story follows the formula: play up images of danger to the children from soul-destroying drugs as reason for more government and power given to government. "Hamideh no longer wakes up in a home ruined by drug addiction. Like hundreds of other virtual orphans of Iran's drug epidemic, Hamideh now lives in a shelter operated by a local charity whose founders were concerned about the effects of the drug problem on children. 'When my mother and my half-brother would argue over money for drugs, he would hit me,' said Hamideh, 15, one of thousands of children in Iran whose families have been ripped apart by dependence on opium and heroin. . . .the number of children growing up in homes upended by drug abuse far exceeds the capacity of the Mashiz Charitable Institute, established in 1994 by a group of wealthy citizens. It is the only charity of its type in Iran. The government funds some detoxification and rehabilitation centers for adults, but the children of the country's afflicted families are largely at the mercy of the institute, which has 11 centers housing nearly 400 children."<sup>70</sup> International and fundamentalist factors in keeping Iran's age-old opium trade illegal, and the black-market prices high, as well as keeping parents in jail of such "orphans", are not mentioned.

Vistas of heroin wastelands are made to appear before our eyes. Is not existence of such misery, these anecdotes we present to you (say government officials), are these not reason enough to accept what we tell you? One writer described teenagers hooked on heroin. "The documentaries also dealt with teenagers being hooked on heroin. What

## Drug War Propaganda

a mess their lives are now, that is if you can call what they're doing living. The documentaries dealt with the fact the cheap heroin on the streets is causing the epidemic of drug addiction amongst teenagers today."<sup>71</sup>

The children, officials weep as they request more money and power, it is all for the children! "The captain grew emotional when he described how one child was induced to smuggle drugs in the tires of his small bicycle, and how young Mexican girls are sent into opium fields to make delicate incisions on poppy buds that draw out valuable resin. . . . 'How bad are these people who would use children this way?' the guide asked rhetorically. Children 'are forced to smuggle for these terrible people, or they're being lured into taking drugs. . . . That's why we're doing all this, to protect our children, our country's future.'"<sup>72</sup> The official did not explain why "to protect our children," that, for example, poppy fields in Tasmania or elsewhere did not cause such child misery. The rhetoric of prohibition needs to be simple, direct. Details and complications, such as the observation that prohibition itself raises the price of such otherwise cheap plants to above the price of gold, details like that are ignored. Better to concentrate on these bad people who, government insists, are corrupting "our children."

"Drug Scourge Returns, Preventive Steps Needed," was another headline's method for conveying the suggestion more money be given government. Saving the children from the scourge of drugs was the reason. "And while a small youth center soon will open . . . hundreds of teen-agers and pre-teens of the Espanola Valley are at high risk of becoming tomorrow's junkies. The area is ripe for federal investment in a major youth center . . . offering day-in, day-out activities, classes and counseling kids can count on. In coordination with the schools, such a center could provide the after-hours attractions and guidance so many youngsters need. . . . Too many of today's neglected kids are tomorrow's overdoses. It's time to dig through that dead end."<sup>73</sup> If only more money is handed to government officials, we are assured, to do the good things: to save our children from the scourge of heroin overdoses, then all will be well.

## **Drug War Propaganda**

### **Unspecified "Drugs" Corrupting Children**

Cannabis, MDMA, amphetamines and heroin dominate news reports which tell of the destruction of the children. Also, we see that the generic term "drugs" -- no specific drug, just "drugs" in general -- is often portrayed as the bogeyman ready to corrupt children. Government, we are told by officials and authorities, needs more funds and power; government must do more.

Children who use drugs can wind up addicted, experts say. "What The Experts Tell Us About Treating Addiction . . . A 1999 article in the Journal of the American Medical Association describes two general categories of drug users. The first is individuals, often adolescents, who use drugs for the pleasure they bring. The second group uses drugs to self-medicate depression or other mental problems. Either group can progress from use to abuse to addiction."<sup>74</sup> From drugs, our children are in danger of addiction. In Britain, "teenagers are the biggest boozers and drug-takers among Europe's kids, a shocking report reveals. A worrying 36 per cent of youngsters aged 15 and 16 have tried LSD, cannabis or Ecstasy."<sup>75</sup> Worrying and shocking, children worldwide are corrupted by "drugs", experts repeat.

One politician, in pleading that more war material and advisors be sent to 'help' peasants in South America, said it was all for our children -- to save our children from the scourge of drugs. Because of the scourge, "what drugs do to our young people," said the politician, government must do more. After all, "There is a scourge sweeping across America and much of it is coming from Latin America."<sup>76</sup>

In "The Teen Stalker Beneath The Sink," a litany of anecdote and expert alarmingly told of the danger of inhalant abuse. More government control and power, in the form of surveillance was the recommended solution to the problem; why, our children are at stake. "Huffing can kill. Two years ago, huffing - inhaling chemicals from aerosol spray cans - caused a car crash in which five . . . teenagers died. On Friday, the . . . coroner ruled that [a seventeen year-old] who died when her car hit a tree on Feb. 3, had inhaled aerosol fumes moments before the crash and probably lost consciousness. What young people don't know about the dangers of inhalants is killing them, according to

## Drug War Propaganda

bereft parents as well as coroners and substance-abuse experts."<sup>77</sup> The crisis thus framed, the answer (more laws restricting freedom for all adults) is put forth. It is, we are told, to save the children. "Kids don't have the image that (an inhalant) is illegal or harmful to them," the country coroner asserted. "You can go out and get it at the store, so that means it can't be that bad, or they'd take it off market."<sup>78</sup> The piece ended with a rallying cry for more governmental control, new laws that ID customers for all purchases at all stores: "cash registers require clerks to enter customers' driver's-license number" before allowing items to be sold.<sup>79</sup> Presumably, police would be called if customers purchased incorrect items.

One writer, in excoriating those who would dare question the harshness of current drug laws, invoked images of the corruption and suffering of children, should drugs laws be changed. "[A]ll I can say to you . . . is I would like you to go to the state hospital and look in the face of a small child born from a crack cocaine mother and tell that child that all of the pain and suffering this child will go through is for nothing, and then go to an orphanage in Panama where there is a 5-year-old child whose parents were killed by members of a South American drug cartel and tell him that no one cares and nothing can be done. I ask you, do these atrocities constitute that our government or we the people should give up?"<sup>80</sup> We must, prohibitionists cry, continue to jail adult users of drugs, adults must never have returned to them traditional rights and freedoms over their very bodies; no, this must never happen, because (we are told), look at these images of drug-corrupted children! No mention is made of the possibility that prohibition itself worsened whatever problems drugs alone caused. Also, as is customary, neither was jail explicitly mentioned.

A piece titled, "Kids On Drugs," decried "drugged-up kids on the wrong side of the law." Describing the devastation, the very youngest, we are informed, are most at risk. "The 11-year-old wasn't alone. Dozens of 17-year-old youths were also taken into police custody. Forty-five of them -- or 69 percent -- had drugs in their system. The younger the arrestees, the worse it got. Of 38 16-year-olds arrested in January, 30 -- or 79 percent -- tested positive. The report showed seven 13-year-old arrestees had been on drugs. They were joined by two 12-year-olds."<sup>81</sup> The massive failure of US alcohol prohibition in the 1920s

## Drug War Propaganda

from likewise keeping children from booze was, wisely, not mentioned.

Another writer, in castigating the "the drug scene," said that "fighting the insidious growth of drugs in schools," meant denouncing the "encroaching drug culture of cannabis and other substances in the school yard."<sup>82</sup> Prohibitionists instinctively know that pushing buttons about "our youth" and "our children" will often get them what they want.

Another report added the weight of authority directly to its headline: "Drug Use Up In Rural Youth, Say Authorities." Our children were in danger of drug-corruption, authorities stressed. The wasteland was painted in alarming tones: "When we started in schools five years ago, we were seeing kids about alcohol and cannabis . . . Now seeing kids who have only tried alcohol and cannabis is a rarity."<sup>83</sup> As elsewhere, government must do ever more, for the youngest of our children, we are repeatedly reminded. "[T]he number of young people using drugs is increasing . . . 'Our experience is that it (drug use) has increased massively' . . . Experimenting with drugs often occurs in Grades 6 and 7, and sometimes even as early as Grade 4."<sup>84</sup> To save our children from an early grave, that is why we must do more, say authorities. "Drug use can have a 'life-long impact' for young people by affecting their schooling and possibly causing them to drop out . . . In some instances, drugs can even be fatal," an authority noted.<sup>85</sup>

One politician, leader of a presumably democratic nation, called for continued and greater governmental powers to incarcerate adults for minor drug possession charges. Images of *the children*, corrupted by drugs, were offered as justification. "[D]rugs are destroying more children . . . the character of young people. . . . children . . . teens . . . likely to be lured into the world of drugs. . . . The child . . . using illegal drugs . . . children . . . [we must] protect our children from drug use," etc.<sup>86</sup> Drugs, politicians shout, must never (again) be allowed to be taken by adults. Otherwise, politicians reiterate, our children would suffer. As one student of drug rhetoric noted, "[T]he law-and-order lobby is pretty effective at pushing emotional buttons. [One police association leader] defended the civil forfeiture law to The News Tribune in Tacoma as a 'a penalty against those people who are preying on our children.'"<sup>87</sup> Whipping up fears over "our children" is always a

## Drug War Propaganda

safe bet for police, prosecutors and other politicians.

### Schools and Drug Corruption of Children

"Come! Hear!

MEETING TONIGHT

School-Parent Association

TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Subject ... TELL YOUR CHILDREN

You and other parent-school groups around the country and must stand united on this and stamp out this frightful assassin of our youth!

You can do it by bringing about compulsory education on the subject of narcotics in general, the dread marihuana in particular!

That is the purpose of this meeting ladies and gentlemen. To lay the foundation for a nationwide campaign by you to demand by law, such compulsory education. Because it is only through enlightenment, that this scourge can be wiped out!

(school principal's PTA speech,  
*Reefer Madness*, 1936 <sup>88</sup>)

To save the children from the ravages of *illegal* drugs in our children's schools, officials say, we must teach children about police power and authority early in life. Thus has it been for most of the history of compulsory government education. The state seizes the irresistibly tempting opportunity to indoctrinate youth on the perceived dangers of (illegal) drugs. Schools are tiny government microcosms, where concern for "our children" translates into a fertile testing ground for prohibitionist propaganda and other police techniques. If only we give police more access to our children, we are told, this will surely save the children from drug corruption.

In one school, the issue of how often and thorough police drug searches should happen was topic for a school-parent meeting. "The meeting will



## Drug War Propaganda

be at 6 p.m. in Kennedy High School," read the announcement. "I know for a fact we have drugs in our school system . . . The parents and children deserve better than that."<sup>89</sup> More police presence, more students searched by police, was the decided solution to be sold to parents. "I've lost a couple of players on my basketball team as well as in my youth center . . . One of them was coerced into bringing (drugs) to school, holding it in his locker, holding it on the corner."<sup>90</sup> "I know for a fact we're going to find marijuana, crack, maybe heroin . . . I know we're going to find something," another school official declared in support of increased police powers in the school.<sup>91</sup>

A New Zealand school applauded ever more intrusive searches, approving new searches of childrens' urine for evidence of drugs. "School Trustees Association president . . . said the body had applauded the policy of random drug tests adopted by Thames High School and others. 'Schools have got to watch these kids who abuse drugs like hawks,' he said. 'This is all about protecting children . . .'"<sup>92</sup> The paper mentioned also that "The association has circulated a petition against cannabis decriminalisation to all school boards of trustees." All for the children; government must work to thwart the democratically expressed will of the people for return of traditional rights; this shall save children from drug corruption.

Quoting police, a Canadian paper concurred: "Drugs Can Be Found In Younger Grades . . . Cases of drug and alcohol abuse are popping up in area elementary schools," a police spokesman said. "He said more than a handful of the 150 drug cases police handled throughout municipality in the past year have involved young people, including Grade 5 students who use so-called soft drugs like hashish and marijuana."<sup>93</sup> Drugs, police say, are corrupting ever younger schoolchildren.

When it comes to purifying our schools for our children, no "fact" shall be challenged. In space one paper gave to an activist (from an organization promoting the jailing of adults for possessing cannabis), it was claimed that "In 1998 nearly 16,000 children died as a result of drug use drugs on school property."<sup>94</sup> (A Center For Disease Control report put the total number of US drug deaths, adult and child, for all drugs *legal* and illegal, at about 16,000 in 1998, the last year for which data was available.<sup>95</sup>)

## Drug War Propaganda

"Critics Wrong About DARE's Effectiveness," confidently asserted another editorial. The writer had discovered "the key," we were assured. "The key to ensuring a drug-free future for children is drug-education programs like DARE, strong community involvement and parents who are involved in their kids' lives."<sup>96</sup> The "key", according to the writer, was more "community" (read: "government" or "state") involvement: more power and money ceded to government, taken from individual citizens. That is the "key" to saving our children from the corruption of drugs. Studies showing that DARE kids take more drugs than non-DARE participants were dismissively alluded to; but not mentioned explicitly.

Drugs, we are told by government, are invading our little childrens' schools. Thus, citizens must give up ever more traditional rights and freedoms to government. It is, government officials explain, all for the children: to save our children's school yards and playgrounds from the scourge of "drugs."

Arresting child dealers shall rid schools of corrupting (illegal) drugs, officials declare. A California paper told of a sweep of area schools. "Nearly 80 drug dealers, most of them students, were arrested in an [secret police] sting operation at Los Angeles high schools in recent months, [police] officials announced Wednesday."<sup>97</sup> Likewise, a Virginia paper told how police secretly installed a student of their own, to root out child drug corruption in a school. "Babyface Bust Turns Teenager Around," proclaimed the headline. "For one Northside High School student, rock-bottom came last summer. . . . His grades had gone from As to Fs. He had pulled back from his extracurricular activities and stopped talking to his parents. He had lost weight, grown his hair, even dressed differently. Life had become all about the drug, the next high, the next buzz he could get."<sup>98</sup> Drugs, we are assured, corrupt teens, making them rebellious and dress differently. But actions taken against students: spying on students, jailing students, fining students, legally hurting students; such are portrayed as kindly acts of a beneficent government.

To protect children from drug-corruption, right-thinking parents and school officials want unapproved talk of drugs to be punished. If such speech is allowed, some say, it might send the wrong message to the

## **Drug War Propaganda**

children. "A student reporter for Highland High School's campus newspaper will not be disciplined for quoting an unnamed source who compared the euphoric effects of the date-rape drug ecstasy with that of 'a permanent orgasm.' The quote -- in a story about the illicit drug's use and effects -- drew the ire of at least one parent, who accused school officials of condoning teen-age drug use by letting the story run."<sup>99</sup> Such deviationism from official pronouncements is tantamount to "condoning teen-age drug use," it is explained.

Harkening back to the successful Vietnam-era tactic of "De-Militarized Zones" (DMZ), government officials and authorities compete with one another to ratchet up jail time for adults found using a forbidden drug "near" a school. "Local high schools are helping crack down on illegal drug use," the paper said. And how was this to be done? By increasing penalties for adult drug users. "Next week, the school district and RCMP kick off a project that would see Mission's secondary schools surrounded by drug-free zones (DFZ). In the zones, anyone caught with drugs, no matter how little, would be charged with drug possession and would receive stiffer penalties in court," police enthusiastically reported. "The DFZ include a two block radius around each of the three local high schools." In other words, people in their own homes, who are caught in such an arbitrarily defined DFZ -- whether or not aware of, or having anything to do with the school -- are charged as child-corrupting school-yard peddlers.<sup>100</sup> Did not the innovation of the "DMZ" turn the tide, ensuring victory in Vietnam? So shall it go with the drug war's DFZ.

### **Prenatal/Infant Drug Corruption**

That adults must always be jailed for taking forbidden drugs -- to save children from corruption -- is axiomatic, government officials assure us. Why, with so many anecdotes of drug-ruined children, authorities weep, how could it not be so? Yet government authorities, ever vigilant to save the children from drug-corruption, are desirous, also, of thrusting governmental police powers ever deeper into the womb. This is to save children from the devastation of drugs, before they are even born, so great is government's concern for the children.

To save the unborn child from the ravages of "drugs", government and

## Drug War Propaganda

government-paid doctors are always more than willing to cut a few constitutional corners. It is for the children, we are assured. "Physicians say they used the urine tests to identify the women with drug problems [i.e. any use of any forbidden drug] and brought in the police to force women to get treatment or face the prospect of going to jail. 'It's the carrot-and-stick approach,' says Robert Hood, an attorney representing . . . the hospital where the women were treated and then arrested. 'We are trying to stop a woman from doing irreparable harm to her child in utero.'"<sup>101</sup> Secret tests for the purpose of jailing low-income mothers are pictured as government merely saving "her child in utero" from forbidden drugs.

In Russia too, we are shown vast scenes of drug-ruined children. It is "A Growing Epidemic's Tiniest Victims . . . HIV Babies Become The Latest Chapter In The Tragedy That Is Drug Abuse In Today's Russia," the headline calmly noted. The article told horrific drug stories. "When the special infants' ward in the Infectious Disease Hospital in Irkutsk opened two years ago, the first arrival was tiny Vanya, who had been abandoned by his mother 12 hours after being born. . . . Next was a desperately underweight child whom the nurses called Dima. . . . Then came Vladislav, newborn son of a 15-year-old heroin addict. . . . Now, the roster numbers 18 children between 4 months and 2 years old who share two traits: having been born infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and having been abandoned by a drug-addicted mother."<sup>102</sup> Drugs, and drug-addicts: they are to blame for corrupting the children before they are even born!

Government, say officials and authorities that work for government, must do more: to save the children from drugs. Doing more most often involves taking traditional rights away from citizens, and giving more power to government police and prosecutors. Of course, we are told, this is for the children! "South Carolina Attorney General Charles Condon instructed doctors statewide to report to police any evidence that they uncover of illegal drug use by patients. Dozens of prosecutions have resulted, with a handful of women being sent to prison for up to three years."<sup>103</sup> To save the children, we are told, low income mothers who test positive for a forbidden drug should be sent to jail. This will help the child, say helpful government prosecutors.

## Drug War Propaganda

"In Myrtle Beach, a young woman is scheduled to stand trial this spring on murder charges after giving birth to a still-born child last year. Doctors say the mother tested positive for cocaine at delivery. They say her drug use could be partially to blame for the death of the unborn child."<sup>104</sup> Stillborn babies have always been a sad fact of human existence. Now, however, like inquisitors and witch hunters of old, zealous government officials are able to heap punishments upon the malefactor mothers of stillborn babies, should they test positive for *drugs*. "If you refuse drug treatment and continue to use cocaine and continue to hurt babies, then we have a jail cell waiting for you," declared one prosecutor.<sup>105</sup>

### Parents Abetting, Ignoring Child Drug Corruption

Not only are the children corrupted by shady characters luring kids to drugs in playground and on street corner, as well as in the womb, children must contend with other harmful role models in their innocent lives. Their own parents! The propaganda of prohibition reminds us that the children are not even safe from their own parents; therefore government must do more.

Fortunately, officials and authorities bubble excitedly, there are solutions. "Parents who impose strict rules on their teen-agers have a better chance of raising drug-free children, but most set few guidelines or none at all, a research center said."<sup>106</sup> The report went on: "Sixty-one percent of 12- to 17-year-olds are at risk of abusing cigarettes, alcohol or drugs," we are told by veteran propagandist Joseph Califano's organization, CASA.<sup>107</sup> The paper (the Washington Post) went on to relate Califano's proclamations in detail: "The study shows that teen-agers who live in highly structured households are at low risk of abusing drugs, whether the children are raised by both parents, a single parent or a stepparent. 'Mothers and fathers who are parents rather than pals can greatly reduce the risk,' said [Califano]."<sup>108</sup> Still, not everyone is as supportive of Califano's point of view as the Washington Post. Noted one student of drug war propaganda:

Today's Quack Commander in Chief, promulgating today's update of this same pharmacopropaganda, is the "progressive" Joseph Califano, a key CIA operative both before and after

## Drug War Propaganda

Kennedy's assassination, Carter's Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, and now founder and president of Columbia University's Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. Califano helps to channel a torrent of public money into 1930's-style politicized research, and coercive, Lambertstyle "treatment." Califano's CASA is one of [the drug czar's] major tools for coordinating national propaganda.<sup>109</sup>

And as we have seen, one of Califano's favorite themes is "the children."

In Australia, parents were likewise encouraged to join the "Drugs Fight." Scare propaganda was the means used to stir parents to action. "The eight-week campaign includes TV advertisements reflecting the unfulfilled hopes of children who became involved with drugs, including images of a dead drug user being zipped into a body bag."<sup>110</sup>

And parents are at times actually helping children to become drug abusers, say the experts and authorities. Proclaimed one headline: "Parents Nurturing Child Drug Use, Experts Say." The story told of the parentally induced child corruption. "When 18-year-old Dennis Cramm, who was sentenced Thursday to 60 years in prison for killing two Everett teen-agers, told authorities his father shared illegal drugs with him, local juvenile probation counselors were not surprised. About 20 percent of teen-agers prosecuted for drug use either had shared drugs or were introduced to them by their parents, Snohomish County probation counselors say. . . . The drugs parents share with their kids include alcohol and prescription medications all the way to heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine and barbiturates, said [one] juvenile drug court coordinator. . . . [Experts and authorities say] that up to 27 percent of drug-addicted teens in Snohomish County told researchers that they live with or have lived with a parent who uses drugs. . . . [One youth] told reporters and investigators that he and his father . . . 45, shared a love for drugs, particularly marijuana. [They] not only partied together, but father and son operated their own marijuana distribution business, the [son] has testified."<sup>111</sup>

Yes, the experts say, mom and pop and using with junior and sis. In "Parents Nurturing Child Drug Use," the story continued, telling tragic

## Drug War Propaganda

tales of kids who were started along the heroin highway ... by their parents.

Teen-agers who began using drugs at an earlier age typically say mom or dad was the supplier. "We see teens who began drug use when they were 6 to 10 years old. The kids who start at that age get the chemicals from their parent . . ."

The introduction begins early -- sometimes before birth, sometimes with the bottle.

"The baby cries too much, so the parent puts sedatives in their bottle,' [one social worker] said.

[The worker's] caseload includes a 17-year-old girl whose first exposure to drugs was helping inject her parents with cocaine. She first used cocaine when she was 8.

Alvers recently counseled another 17-year-old girl whose parents provided her with heroin when she was 15.

"Now she's terribly hooked on heroin. It breaks your heart," [the government social worker] said. . . .

"They'll say, 'Since my kids are going to use these chemicals, I'm going to teach them how to use these drugs right.'"

"Such a parent is no longer a parent," [the government expert] said. "The parent is now their dope buddy."

In years past, some parents introduced their children to alcohol, which was not uncommon, probation counselors say.

But now, a generation of parents accustomed to a wide range of drugs are sharing them with their children, said [the] director of the state's Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse.<sup>112</sup>

Because parents are hooking their children on heroin at tender ages, government authorities say, they are no longer parents. (Which means,

## **Drug War Propaganda**

government must "intervene" to "save the children" from "an abusive situation," etc.)

Do not the tragic results of parents sharing drugs with children, corrupting the children with drugs, indicate that government must do more? "The father and step mother of a teen-ager caught selling drugs at [a high school] have been accused of supplying her LSD and encouraging her to sell it to her friends, authorities said. . . . The indictments are the result of their 17-year-old daughter going to police last fall and telling of drugs being in her home. 'They'd give it to me, encourage me . . . the girl told [a reporter]'"<sup>113</sup>

### **Lurid Drug Tales: Child Sexual Corruption**

As mentioned before, forbidden drugs are often linked with the sexual corruption of young people. This is a constant prohibitionist theme. Promiscuity, child sexual abuse, rape, prostitution: all are blamed on forbidden drugs. Drugs, officials and experts warn, are turning our children into street prostitutes. Government, say government authorities, must do more.

Noted one researcher in the 1970s:

The media coverage of the numerous lifestyle changes of the 1960's constantly associated drugs with communal living, cohabitation, etc. Pictures of teenage girls allegedly prostituting to "support their habits" blazoned across the television screen did nothing but update this age old association between chemicals and sexual corruption.<sup>114</sup>

Little has changed in the intervening years.

One paper told of the heartbreaking take of a young girl who sold her body for drugs. "Shelly Williams found out that she can get a lot more from drugs than a quick high and an escape from reality. She found out she can also get a new place to live (prison), a new way to make fast cash (selling her body) and a few new friends (drug dealers and other users). . . . Now she wants other young people to be aware of the dangers of drug use."<sup>115</sup> Drug use, say drug warriors, leads to the sexual corruption of our children.



## Drug War Propaganda

A Malaysian paper described another young girl, lured to a life of prostitution to get money for drugs. "Drugs and sex are a lethal combination. Sex for money to buy drugs is what drives teenage sex workers like Mei Ling to the streets. . . . HE was 55 and she was 16 when they went on their first date more than two years ago. . . . 'And he said, 'Okay, let's go back to my place and I'll just have sex with you. I'll give you RM250 if you just let me have sex with you.'"<sup>116</sup> Because of drugs, we are shown, the child is corrupted. "As she talks about her life as a sex worker, she nervously taps the fork on her plate of noodles. . . . She said yes to the man because she needed money for heroin. . . . 'I just blanked out and let him do what he wanted. It was disgusting, but I kept saying to myself, I can go get some drugs right after this.'"<sup>117</sup> In such articles telling of prostitution for drug-money, it is probably best to not mention that drug prices are kept very high by prohibition. Better, perhaps, to focus on the evils of drugs.

Likewise, an Australian paper described how "drug addiction, childhood trauma" caused carnal corruption. "A new study has found that their paths are marked with drug addiction, childhood trauma and homelessness. . . . Port Phillip Council estimates there are about 100 women sex workers operating in the area."<sup>118</sup> "They have been abused by their fathers. Beaten by their boyfriends. They are mentally ill. Uneducated. They are St Kilda's street prostitutes."<sup>119</sup>

A paper in California used similar rhetorical device to link drugs and sexual corruption. "She would steal to buy crack. She was homeless. She was a prostitute."<sup>120</sup> A similar solution is held up: government. "Since the center's opening, it has harbored drug-addicted prostitutes and gang members who have come seeking help, Sturdivant said. 'I knew once we got over here, we were going to be the light,' Sturdivant said. 'The word is out. We've had several gang members that have come in and asked for help. We're having prostitutes walking in all the time. . . . Sturdivant, who was addicted to crack cocaine, says the drugs took everything from her.'"<sup>121</sup>

In Canada, the same tales are heard. "An 11-year-old Oregon girl was forced to work 12 hours a day as a prostitute in Vancouver, earning up to \$1,000 before being spotted by a youth squad officer, police said yesterday. Three U.S. residents have been charged with abducting the

## Drug War Propaganda

girl at a Portland mall, plying her with LSD, speed and Ecstasy, and forcing her on to the street. . . . Police allege the girl was pumped full of drugs and caffeine pills to keep her awake and working."<sup>122</sup> Our children are corrupted, authorities stress, by drugs.

Another report spoke of the devastation that was wrought, a reporter suggested, by the discovery of marijuana. "Three years ago this month, I had interviewed Pauser in this same coffee shop for a column on the difficulties of raising teenagers in today's permissive society. Genevieve Pauser was 15 at the time and had just gone through a hellacious 18-month period in which she'd discovered pot, skipped classes regularly and was seeing a 20-year-old gangbanger from Chicago."<sup>123</sup> The implication is clear: marijuana is causing the sexual corruption of our children!

Another paper wrote of the sexual corruption of another child. Drugs, the article told readers, were to blame. "Jenn and another Vancouver-area girl are featured . . . Jenn's mother Carol . . . helping her pack her duffle bag so she can come home from a flop house where she's been smoking crack and hooking to pay for it. . . . 'She's 16 years old,' her mother says."<sup>124</sup>

In Australia, an anti- drugs ad from "a series of prime-time TV commercials" (government propaganda) also used the image of child sexual corruption to vilify drug users. "One commercial depicts an 18-year-old prostitute lying on a bed, staring blankly. She folds some money and sticks it into the wasteband of her pants."<sup>125</sup> "[A] teenage girl who appears to have just had sex."<sup>126</sup>

Experts warn that children are easily turned into prostitutes by drugs. "The path from drugs to sexual exploitation is short and straight. 'It can happen so easily . . . The person providing the drugs can say, well if you don't have any money right now, how about a little sexual favour instead? For [one child] it was just a matter of getting in the car once with a drug dealer and from then on it was, oh, okay, I can do that. I can pay for my drugs this way.'"<sup>127</sup>

Because of the irresistible lure of illegal drugs, to protect our children from a life of prostitution, say experts, more must be done. "Shiquita Linear never imagined she'd spend most of her 20s as a prostitute on

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Union Avenue. But that's what happened after she got hooked on crack cocaine. The drug lured her to a fast, dangerous and illegal profession to support her daily habit."<sup>128</sup>

Drugs, repeat authorities, are turning our innocent young girls into hookers. "'She was a funny, dynamic, little pup.' She was also among the top students in her class . . . 'But all those things fell by the wayside when she did drugs . . . because the motivation was gone. People who have kids who do drugs know this. . . . your child doesn't even look the same anymore.' . . . Nor were they aware, she says, that their daughter had been working for an escort service, as a police report indicated."<sup>129</sup>

### **Date-Rape Drugs**

Not only are drugs turning our children into street prostitutes, say officials, our children are also in danger of being slipped a drug, and being sexually assaulted while unconscious.

"The so-called date rape drugs -- which include Rohypnol, Librium, GHB, Robaine and chloral hydrate -- are tasteless and odorless when they are slipped into a drink. They can cause muscle relaxation, disorientation, hallucinations, loss of inhibitions, blackouts and memory loss. Because the victim may not remember being assaulted, criminal prosecutions can be difficult."<sup>130</sup>

Though drugs like chloral hydrate have been used by criminals for years to drug victims, by renaming such drugs "date rape" drugs, posturing politicians can appear concerned by passing new laws creating new penalties for possession of such drugs. This way, shrewd politicians can show they are getting tough on drugs, to save children from corruption. "The use of so-called 'date rape' drugs could bring harsher penalties under a bill approved by a House committee . . . A subcommittee heard powerful testimony on Thursday from a high school senior who had been a victim of a sexual assault after she had unwittingly consumed an alcoholic drink laced with a date rape drug. The girl said when she was 15, a friend had given her the drink and the last thing she remembered was being carried to bed. She later awoke to find another friend helping her put her clothes on."<sup>131</sup>

Other government officials and authorities agree: government must do

## **Drug War Propaganda**

more, to save children from the corruption of "date rape" drugs. "DRUG USE ON THE RISE . . . Law enforcement officials say ecstasy and the 'date-rape drug' GHB are the favorite choices. Colorless and odor free, it's hard to detect when slipped into a mixed drink. . . . [GHB has been] linked increasingly to sexual assaults. Locally, recreational usage of the 'date-rape drug' and other designer drugs are on the rise. 'We're seeing more cases involving GHB and ecstasy,' said [one secret drug police official] 'They're becoming the drug of choice for young people.'"<sup>132</sup>

### **Legalization Painted as Hurting Children**

When it comes to the issue of "legalizing drugs," (that is to say, not jailing adults for using marijuana) prohibitionists tell us that such must never be done. Otherwise, the rhetoric of prohibition repeats, the children might be corrupted. This is a common prohibitionist tact. When it is suggested that penalties for marijuana use be reduced, prohibitionist propagandists are sure to stand up and say that "drugs" (marijuana changed to drugs to make it seem worse), must never be "legalized" (any proposed lessening of marijuana laws will be termed "legalize" etc.), because otherwise the children would be corrupted.

"Legalizing drugs won't work," one editor asserted. Why? Because of protesters on TV appearing to be under 21. "Is it just me or do many of the pot-smoking protesters that we see on TV appear to be under the age of 19 years? I see kids who look 14 to 16 years old smoking at these hemp rallies. Do they seriously believe that if drugs were to be legalized that the government would set the legal age under the 19 years currently required to drink alcohol?"<sup>133</sup> "Legalizing drugs," say the experts, can never work: because of the children.

Because of poor examples that adults might set for children, say authorities, adults must always be imprisoned for taking forbidden substances, forbidden substances must never be "legalized." To do less, say prohibitionists, would be an invitation for teens to use drugs. We must jail adults who take marijuana, we are told, otherwise kids would get the wrong message.

"Even worse, [legalizing drugs] would send a strong message

## Drug War Propaganda

to our young people that they can find refuge from their problems and reality through artificial chemicals.

Pro legalization champions can claim that by legalizing drugs it would be easier to control their use and prevent access to young people.

But anyone who has bothered to look at our society's experience with alcohol and tobacco realizes that making such substances widely available and legal for adults is simply an invitation to teens to follow the already poor example set by adults.

Research has shown the kind of devastating effects that drugs can have on young bodies during their growing years. Law enforcement officers, social workers and addiction counselors can describe the equally chilling effect that chronic addiction can have emotionally on children who spend those formative years zoned out from normal life.<sup>134</sup>

Because not jailing adults for "drugs" (meaning, of course *marijuana*) might send the wrong "message" to children, thereby becoming "an invitation to teens" to take drugs, having "devastating effects . . . on young bodies during their growing years," adults must always be jailed for using forbidden drugs. It is for the children, newspaper editorial and government official sing in harmony. Notes one student of drug policy: "U.S. school children have been bombarded with more antidrug propaganda than any generation in history."<sup>135</sup>

All manner of death, disease and destruction is blamed on the desire to not lock up medical marijuana users. We must continue to jail medical marijuana users, we must continue to forfeit their homes and property, we must fine them, and force-treat them to force them to stop using marijuana, say staunch drug warriors. To not imprison those who use marijuana as medicine, they assure us, would be to start our little children down the path of corruption, addiction and death.

"Parents Say Legal Reefer Is Madness," read a Washington Times headline, implying that all parents are on the (one) side of the issue the article presented. "Larry Katz stood in front of the U.S. Supreme Court

## Drug War Propaganda

building yesterday holding a grainy, black-and-white oversized photo of his stepson." The family, the newspaper carefully explained, were *just plain folks*: "a typical college student, smiling broadly . . ." <sup>136</sup> ("Another propaganda device is called 'plain folks' or 'average people,' which involves an attempt to identify the propagandist and his views with the best interests of the people." <sup>137</sup>) "He overdosed on heroin at 20 and died in the family's Connecticut home in 1996. Mr. Katz and his wife, Ginger, traveled to the high court to demonstrate against the legalization of marijuana for medicinal purposes. Mr. Katz . . . spoke bitterly about how marijuana, which Ian first tried at 14, started his stepson down a road to addiction and ultimately to death." <sup>138</sup>

The carefully orchestrated protest described by the article (protest against not jailing some adults who use marijuana as medicine), contained more plain folks anecdotes of children corrupted by marijuana. (Anecdotes presented by medical marijuana users are denounced as just "anecdotal." <sup>139</sup>) "Karen Shreiner . . . carried a poster-sized picture of a friend's daughter, Angela . . . who died from a heroin overdose at 19. She said Angela first started using marijuana at 14 and argued that the drug led to Angela's abuse of stronger drugs, despite several failed trips to treatment centers. She said Angela had several run-ins with the law before dying of an overdose in 1998. 'We just want to make people aware that marijuana is a steppingstone drug,' Mrs. Shreiner said." <sup>140</sup>

Prosecutors and other government officials who earn their living from imprisoning drug users agree: "drugs" (meaning especially marijuana), must never be "legalized" (meaning adults must be jailed for taking it). It is all for the children, prosecutors sniff. To save them from lives of crime and disease.

"What about our youth?" rhetorically asked one government prosecutor, in space given to him by one paper. "It is the 16 to 25-year-old male age group that I deal with on a most consistent basis. They commit burglaries, forgeries and larcenies, not for the money to make a living, but for the means to buy illegal drugs." <sup>141</sup> Because illegal drugs are black-market expensive, they must never be made legal (which would lower the price.) This is because illegal, black-market drugs are so expensive that (unlike as for beer and cigarettes) the "16 to 25-year-

## Drug War Propaganda

old" males are, the prosecutor asserts, committing crimes to pay for the illegal drugs. Which is why they must be kept illegal and expensive, explain prosecutors.

"Legalizing drugs," must never be again allowed, drug warriors shout. Otherwise, failing to jail adults for taking "drugs" (meaning marijuana), "would make drug use an accepted behavior and, inevitably, more young people would use them."<sup>142</sup> Society would thus decline, prohibitionists assure us. To save the children, "drugs" must never be "legalized."

Prohibitionist apologists agree that, since refusing to jail adults for taking marijuana might give children more access to marijuana, adults who take marijuana must therefore always be thrown into jail. This is to protect children, drug warriors say. "Kids who use pot [are] 85 times more likely to move on to these other drugs, cocaine and heroin! It is, in fact, I quote, a 'gateway' drug! So I think if you care about your kids the way I do about mine and other parents do, you don't want them to give them the opportunity by making it legal or decriminalizing it where they have more access to it, which will be the fundamental result of what you advocate, which I say is irresponsible!"<sup>143</sup> As is customary, the rhetoric of prohibition finds it useful to leave off mention of "jail" or "prison." Better, instead, to whip up fears over "our children."

Because of children, say prohibitionist propagandists, adult Americans must never be "allowed" to "intoxicate" (that is to say, adults must always be jailed for using mind-altering drugs like marijuana). Petty distinctions between responsible use of a substance and abuse, as for alcohol, are distinctions that fill prohibitionists with righteous indignation, prohibitionists loudly proclaim, because questioning government dictates on drug policy indicates disregard for the children.

"Should Americans Be Allowed to Intoxicate?" one talk show asked. In the show, a critic of current drug policy noted that alcohol use and abuse were not the same, and that even alcohol abusers were not jailed, if they did not endanger others. "But this is such a morally hollow argument that it makes me shake," quivered one drug war apologist. "It makes me shake, because what you're saying is that you don't care about these 3 million children. You don't care about them."<sup>144</sup> Not jailing

## **Drug War Propaganda**

adults for taking cannabis, not going along with whatever new punishments are proposed for drug users, proposing any lessening of drug-law punishments is unthinkable, say drug warriors who shake with rage over the very thought. Unthinkable because such would indicate critics of drug policy do not sufficiently care for the children, care for children as much as prohibitionists care for the children. The children, say drug warriors, are the reason "drugs" must never be "legalized."

### **Summary**

The prohibitionist propagandist continually plays upon parental fears for their children. Marijuana, Amphetamines, pain killers, and dance drugs like MDMA are all corrupting and killing children, say prohibitionists.

Helpless children, says the rhetoric of prohibition, are endangered from substances that politicians have declared to be illegal. Thus adults must be jailed all the more.

Drugs corrupt children, say prohibitionists. Children are corrupted by drugs in school, indicating the need for government to jail more adults. Children are corrupted by drugs as toddlers and sometimes even before birth. Parents, says the prohibitionist, are at fault for ignoring and abetting their children's descent into drugs.

The propaganda of prohibition scares parents with lurid tales of children who are sexually corrupted by drugs. So-called "date rape" drugs are said to be used by sexual predators to molest children, this rhetoric tells us.

In view of the many terrible dangers that forbidden drugs pose to children, then, the propaganda of prohibition vehemently denies that "drugs" can ever be "legalized." The prohibitionist "knows" that in order to save our children, adults must always be jailed for taking drugs.

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Battles With Demons

*"a pure scourge upon the land ... demonic fire"*  
-- a judge, on record in sentencing of a woman to 10  
years for selling four oxycodone pills <sup>1</sup>

*"In ecstasy's shadow: Innocence meets evil in a  
magnetic little pill as the stamp of an underground  
world of dancing and drugs creeps out of the dark,"*  
-- newspaper article on MDMA <sup>2</sup>

*"There's no doubt it's very much a plague." . . . "Oxy  
rolls in. It's so powerful, it just lays waste." . . . "This  
is a nuclear bomb," "It's contagious."*  
-- newspaper article on oxycodone<sup>3</sup>

An extremely popular method of vilifying drugs and drug users, is to demonize them. This is the prohibitionist propaganda theme of picturing drug users as wicked fiends, miserable yet contagious. This theme often speaks of the "epidemic" of drugs. This prohibition propaganda theme declares war.

Since the Harrison Act of 1914, the user and the seller of illicit drugs have both been characterized as evil, criminal, insane, and always in search of new victims, the victims are characterized as young children. Drug usage is characterized as "contagious;" its increase (real or imagined) is characterized as an "epidemic." Efforts to reduce drug usage are referred to as the "war" on or "battle" against drug abuse.<sup>4</sup>

### Drug Fiends, Dope Demons

### Scourges and Plagues Upon the Land

## Drug War Propaganda

Prohibitionists often demonize drug use as a "scourge" or "plague", as if drug use were a punishment inflicted upon a people by a vengeful deity: a divine whip used to afflict the unrighteous, to test the faithful. Describing drug use as a "plague" or "scourge" occurs so often, it is easy to skip over.

A Vermont paper warned of the scourge of heroin. "Big-City Scourge Besets Rural State Vermont Struggles With Influx Of Heroin."<sup>5</sup> The scourge of "big-city drugs" are overrunning the countryside, say police. "Outsiders might picture the typical Vermont drug user as an aging hippie smoking pot at an outdoor concert in the rolling hills of a dairy farm. But police and politicians say the state is seeing a dramatic surge in big-city drugs."<sup>6</sup>

A Kentucky paper warned also of the teen-ager crisis and scourge of oxycodone. "Cure For E. Kentucky Scourge Will Require Broad-based Effort . . . Abuse of prescription painkillers in Eastern Kentucky is one of those recurring news stories that lose their power to shock until a new drug starts killing people and addicting teen-agers. [A government prosecutor] said last week that illicit use of the prescription drug OxyContin contributed to 59 deaths in just five counties over the last 13 months. . . . this trend has the makings of a public-health crisis. Especially alarming is the drug's spread among adolescents."<sup>7</sup>

Another writer justified police force against drug users, because of the "drug scourge" and the wickedness of (illegal) drug vendors. "It would be naive to believe that arresting narcotics traffickers is the only solution to the nation's drug scourge or, similarly, to think that arresting bank robbers, rapists or muggers will cause those criminal activities to cease. Enforcing drug laws is the necessary 'line in the sand' to protect all citizens against the ravages of violent crime and the human carnage that these 'drug kingpins' are more than willing to exact for cold-blooded, enormous financial gains."<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, the editor of another paper praised police actions taken. This was because of the "meth scourge," the editor explained. "Utah law-enforcement scored a major victory in the war on drugs over the weekend. But the action that is believed to have brought down a major methamphetamine ring was tempered by the knowledge of how

## **Drug War Propaganda**

prevalent the meth scourge is in the state."<sup>9</sup>

Another editor in another state spoke of the "scourge" of another drug. "OxyContin has become a scourge to Southwest Virginia. Lawmakers and law-enforcement officials are responding, as they must."<sup>10</sup> Government must act, and do more, say officials and authorities. It is because of the scourge, they say.

Another writer agreed. Drugs are a scourge, they must be fought! "Perhaps some people would agree that the 'war' on drugs is a lost cause. I cannot believe, however, that those people have ever lived in a drug-infested community, where young parents, fearful of being struck by frequent gunfire, feel compelled to sleep on the floor each night while their children sleep in a bathtub. The elderly become prisoners at home, fearful of being robbed by crack addicts. . . . [Police have] embarked on a tireless and, yes, dangerous campaign to rid . . . communities of drug predators."<sup>11</sup>

### **Demon Meth**

Methamphetamines (meth, speed, crystal, crank) is a terrible scourge upon the land, turning users of this drug into sickly wraiths, living only for their next dose. Illegal amphetamine laboratories, officials say, are pox upon houses and curses upon the land.

Another paper repeated an addict's meth stories. "Addict Tells His Drug Tale About Meth . . . Of all the drugs Harley has experienced over his lifetime, he considers methamphetamine to be one of the worst. . . . The intensity of the experience, the paranoia, and the way the body is affected all couple together to create a very dangerous combination." The meth addict is a horrific demon: "Harley said his body would break out in sores that were bleeding or infected. His skin would constantly itch and the last thing in the world he had time to do was take a shower."<sup>12</sup>

The meth addict: a demon; the meth lab: a demon's den, are reason enough, say officials and authorities, to restrict Internet use. "In fact it is becoming easier in some ways to produce meth. Add the Internet to the crime-fighting obstacles. Not only can 'cooks' find recipes for making methamphetamine on the Net, but they can also buy their



## Drug War Propaganda

supplies on it. At an increasing number of busts, local law enforcement officers are finding receipts from drugmakers' Internet purchases."<sup>13</sup> It is not to isolate and shut down drug reformers, no: government needs to censor the Internet to save our children from the demon meth.

Information on the internet and in books, say authorities, that is the problem. "This stuff [meth] is the *devil's nectar*," assert drug police.<sup>14</sup>

Other editors exhort government to do more, to fight the insidious meth enemy. "Keep Pressure On Meth-Makers . . . Federal, state and local funding, coupled with the kind of dedication demonstrated in West Valley City, is needed to wage a successful war against this insidious enemy."<sup>15</sup>

Another state, the same scourge: "The Meth Explosion." The article told of the wickedness visited upon families because of the demon (illegal) amphetamines. "Next to the table, a red tricycle and a small child's pink-and-white bicycle lie on the grass. . . . the look of the average moderate-income apartment [which] doubled as a clandestine drug laboratory, where caustic chemicals and household cleaners were cooked into highly addictive methamphetamine." The piece continued, warning of the meth influx. "The number of clandestine drug labs found in Snohomish County rose 62 percent from 1999 to 2000. That concerns law enforcement officials, prosecutors, health officials [because of] toxic contamination, human health problems, increased criminal activity and public danger."<sup>16</sup>

Illegal amphetamine labs, like demonically possessed houses, are said to emit a horrible stench. "The typical meth house is piled to the windows, inside and out, with garbage. There usually is mouse or pet feces on the floor and 'horrendous amounts of filth . . . The smell is sometimes overwhelming for those who have a queasy stomach.'"<sup>17</sup>

"Bathtub" demon meth, not demon rum or bathtub gin, is the new bogeyman in this drug war. Government kindly requests that neighbors denounce their neighbors to government police. "Meth makers and users stay in their own circles, so police haven't had much success in busting meth labs locally. 'I was told more than once she ( the suspect ) was cooking it in her bathtub,' [police] said. [Police hope] by asking people to watch out for the sights and smells of meth production,

## Drug War Propaganda

people will turn on their neighbors."<sup>18</sup>

Demon meth's users are legion. And increasing, say officials, experts, and authorities. "Authorities Alarmed By Large Seizure . . . the largest seizure of methamphetamine in Wisconsin is alarming because of the amount of the drug . . . [government police] authorities said the confiscation of 37 pounds of the drug -- with a street value of \$1.5 million - is alarming because the drug was brought in to 'test-market' the area in anticipation of eventually moving larger quantities. State drug officials have said the presence of methamphetamines is mainly concentrated in the western area of the state."<sup>19</sup>

The nightmare of demon bathtub meth is an evil threat, say government officials and authorities. "'Meth' Labs Called Threat To Neighbors . . . Methamphetamine . . . is rearing its addictive head in northwest Ohio . . . The drug . . . is made in bathrooms, motel rooms, vehicle trunks, and coolers with items that can be bought at convenience and hardware stores, authorities say."<sup>20</sup>

The rhetoric of amphetamine prohibition outdoes itself demonizing meth users and meth makers. "Volatile chemicals and unstable producers, who are often meth addicts, can create an explosive situation for [police] officials. . . . [Meth labs are] 'chemical time bombs.'"<sup>21</sup>

Demon meth causes users to abuse children in "grotesque" ways, say officials. "Surge In Meth Use Takes Toll On Rural Children . . . 'You sit in front of a mirror and pick at your face until it's one giant scab . . . I taught my kids to be self-sufficient at 3 years old and open a can of soup for themselves.' Meth's initial high plunges into paranoia and rage, fed by a lack of sleep. Users become single-minded in their need to get more of the drug, losing any ability to empathize, even with their own children. The situation can spiral into grotesque acts of abuse or neglect on children desperately seeking attention."<sup>22</sup>

Demon meth users, explain government officials and authorities seeking to justify and increase budgets, are not human, so wicked and evil is this demonic drug. "'You're basically not a human being anymore,' said . . . a special agent with the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement in Sacramento. 'Up in the Merced area, a long-term [meth] user who was not under the influence at the time, took a pitchfork and stabbed his two

## Drug War Propaganda

kids and killed them."<sup>23</sup> Noted one student of drug war rhetoric, "As with Nazi actions against Jews, drug warrior actions against users are made more palatable through rhetoric portraying victims as nonhuman."<sup>24</sup>

Meth fiends, say government authorities, do evil things to the children. "Caseworkers have seen baby bottles stored next to poisonous chemicals, infants with meth powder on their clothes and bare feet, children fed the drug to keep them on the same waking cycle as their parents, and addicts as young as 12."<sup>25</sup>

This is all the more cause for alarm, say some officials, because amphetamines are "the most addictive" of all drugs. "Despite those risks," a paper in Texas reported, "methamphetamine's profitability and highly addictive quality continue to boost its popularity among dealers and users. 'I can't emphasize how much this drug has a potential for addiction,' [one official] said. 'It's the most addictive drug out there.'"<sup>26</sup>

The horrible demonic user of meth is why, say police authorities, neighbors must be all the more ready to denounce other neighbors to police. Demon meth, say police, is the reason. Pliant newspapers and editors couldn't agree more. "We Must All Help Cops" to end the horrible plague, say editors. What must be done to stay the plague, say authorities? "They need every law-abiding local resident to be on the lookout for anything that might hint of methamphetamine use or trafficking. . . . keep on the lookout for irrational behavior from their children . . . We all should keep an eye out for possible signs of the drug's presence -- a neighbor who's seemingly up all night, refuse that contains a lot of household cleaning and automotive items."<sup>27</sup> Forget about the amphetamines the governments forces children to take to make them behave better in government schools. Because of the terrible things government says *illegal* amphetamines do, neighbors should denounce to police others in the neighborhood who are up too late at night. Or who do a lot of household cleaning, say. This will stay the meth plague, police and government assure.

"We're not telling people to be paranoid," the editor sanely continued, "but we want everyone to realize that [government police] are calling this problem an epidemic, and that designation should by no means be

## Drug War Propaganda

taken lightly." Since government is calling this or that "war" or "cancer" or "epidemic" -- adoring editors say of government pronouncements -- government pronouncements must be given all the more credence. Why, we have, such editors say, the government's use of the word as evidence that the word should be used!

"Substance abuse," (the editorial yet continued, sliding from meth to drugs in general), "from excessive drinking to using illegal narcotics, can without a doubt send people's lives spiraling out of control, causing them to lose their jobs, families and even end up dead. Police say that a telltale sign of methamphetamine use is people acting irrationally, committing robberies, sex crimes and other criminal acts."

*Suggesting local crimes are caused by meth (yet studiously avoiding the error of explicitly claiming meth caused this or that),* the editorial mentioned horrible local crimes. "Anyone who regularly reads The Review can see that there is no shortage of crime, especially sexual assaults," said the editorial. "Our advice to everyone is to treat this epidemic like you would any other epidemic because it's just as destructive and deadly." Reveling in the meth "epidemic" metaphor, the paper urged readers reify the metaphor into concrete reality. Treat the "epidemic" imagery sold by government, as if it were real, say editors. To what end, and what are the actions that the paper (in concert with government) calls readers to take? Turn in your meth "infected" neighbors (or neighbors who stay up too late, or clean too much), sing experts, officials and authorities, in unison with media: "We must all do our part to turn those infected by this powerful drug into the authorities, so that meth users and addicts can get help and be stopped from spreading the addiction to others."<sup>28</sup> Turn them all in, says government: let government sort them out.

Concerning the demon meth, another editor laid out his requirements for the "New Drug Czar's Mission." The mission was to "stop methamphetamines by treating California as a virtual source country. California's 'super-labs' create 300 times the amount of meth per lab as those found anywhere else in America and account for 80 percent of the meth consumed in the U.S. We need to dedicate sufficient federal resources to stop this bilge."<sup>29</sup> To stop the bilge of the demon meth epidemic, California must be quarantined.

## Drug War Propaganda

Meth, we are reminded, constantly, turns victims into the living dead. Wraiths that would steal from their mothers. "'They look like walking death' . . . and in some cases that's an accurate description. . . . 'I have bruises all over my legs from sticking needles in them,' says Marie. . . She's been doing speed for 20 years. . . . I've stole from my own mother."<sup>30</sup>

Amphetamines (illicit amphetamines, that is), are evil, say prohibitionists, causing all manner of demonic wickedness. One woman in "the Tulsa county jail for drug-related crimes . . . told me she had watched a meth-intoxicated friend blow her face off with a shotgun. Incredibly, seeing her friend's brains splattered across a motel room wasn't enough to induce her to stop using." This horrific tale was worked into an appeal for continued government power to incarcerate or force-treat (illegal) amphetamine users. "As a local counselor explained, addiction is so pernicious it often takes incarceration for an addict to confront the havoc in her life. The addicts I interviewed credited the strong arm of the law and intense therapy for their tenuous sobriety."<sup>31</sup> Continued and greater government force and government powers to jail recalcitrant drug users is the answer, say those with a vested interest in that policy. "Lawmakers Join Forces In Meth War," another headline blared. Similar possession by meth-demon was blamed for death and destruction. "It also included a sobering slide show that featured a photograph of . . . a 4-year-old Fresno boy beaten to death by his meth-using father. 'This is the real victim of meth,' said [a police drug agent]."<sup>32</sup>

A Kentucky paper told how the "deadly poison" of (illegal) amphetamines were corrupting the children: "I heard from police officers and prosecutors about how clandestine methamphetamine labs were springing up all over western Kentucky. I heard from ministers, teachers and family counselors about how this deadly poison was transforming their beautiful children into empty shells of who they were before."<sup>33</sup>

A paper in Illinois explained that propaganda was "the only way" to solve "the problem." Children, the paper said, were at risk from meth maniacs. "Meth Labs Leave Hidden Danger . . . 'The only way to get behind the problem is to explain to people how devastating the

## Drug War Propaganda

addiction is and the personality changes it causes. And, the fact that children bear much more of a brunt of the impact of this - socially, not just by exposure."<sup>34</sup> An article in a Texas paper agreed. Moreover, the scourge was spreading as a contagious virus, the paper asserted. "Meth Labs Sprouting . . . 'If you map it across the country year by year, it looks like a virus spreading across,' he said. 'It's highly addictive. It takes over people's lives very quickly, and they end up in emergency rooms, dead or ... in treatment.'"<sup>35</sup>

### Demon OxyContin

Oxycodone (OxyContin, Oxys, etc) is a terrible scourge upon the land, turning users of this drug into sickly wraiths, living only for their next dose. Rivaling the amphetamine stories for details of drug demons, OxyContin (a potent time-release oxycodone pill), is said to be a fiery demonic bane upon the people, the use of which is said to be epidemic.

"Painkiller OxyContin a Factor in 120 Deaths," one headline revealed. The scourge was summarized: "OxyContin was originally thought to be less prone to abuse because its narcotic was locked in a time-release formula. . . . But abusers quickly discovered how to disarm the time-release formula; they simply crushed the tablet, then swallowed, inhaled or injected the powder to give themselves a high as powerful as heroin's. . . . Illegal use of OxyContin mushroomed even though no prescription drug in this country is more tightly regulated."<sup>36</sup>

"Deaths From OxyContin Overdoses On The Rise," another paper reported. "Although it is prescribed in pills, addicts usually lick off a coating designed to release the drug gradually, crush the pills into powder, and then snort or inject it to obtain a euphoric high similar to that produced by heroin." Reports stress the hooking euphoria of this potent oxycodone pill. Withdrawal is described as torture. "It doesn't take long to get hooked. Withdrawal symptoms include nausea, stomach cramps, diarrhea and chill bumps known by users as 'cold turkey.'"<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, users are possessed by desire for the drug. "'These people are getting hooked on it and they are out of control,' [one official] said. 'They will steal, they will rob, they will trade guns, they will trade sex, they will do anything to get it.'"<sup>38</sup>

A Kentucky paper, in the epicenter of the OxyContin "epidemic", spoke

## Drug War Propaganda

of the potent patent oxycodone pill as if it were an apocalyptic curse upon the region. "OxyContin has been making headlines as the latest in a never-ending list of plagues on Kentucky's most impoverished areas. . . . But even in an area where the drug trade has continued to flourish, OxyContin has earned its high profile. Experts have been blown away by the drug's sudden rise in popularity, as well as its potency and ability to hook even the most casual users, sending them into a tailspin of all-consuming addiction. Drug detox beds are filling up with increasing frequency in a region already stretched beyond its limit to help addicts."<sup>39</sup> Reports strive to outdo one another in their descriptions of the "plague." Users are turned into instant Oxy addicts. Oxy addicts, authorities say, rob from mothers and pharmacies, sell their possessions and bodies.

A Virginia paper likewise described the situation. The strong euphoria of strong oxycodone pills, the demon OxyContin, was said to be converting citizens into fiends. "OxyContin, which comes in pills ranging from 10 to 160 milligrams, is generally prescribed for those in acute or terminal pain. The Food and Drug Administration approved its use in 1996. Abusers have found that they can attain a powerful feeling of euphoria by crushing and snorting the pills or by injecting them. Those methods of taking the drug, however, can be deadly."<sup>40</sup>

"'Epidemic Of Misuse' Linked To Oxycontin," another headline warned. "The dominant health care provider in Western Virginia unveiled more help for addicts and safeguards to curb prescription fraud, saying OxyContin abuse 'is spreading with enough speed and intensity to create an epidemic of misuse.'" The Demonic grip of OxyContin was described, "The drug's addictive effect 'is like a *claw* that once it gets them it doesn't let go,'" said one social worker.<sup>41</sup>

The drug kingpins of Hazard county are trading in OxyContin these days. "HAZARD, Ky. . . . Her mother overdosed on OxyContin or Oxy. . . . [Another man] shot to death by two men who rifled through his pockets looking for OxyContin. [Another man] was jailed after robbing a bank to fund his Oxy addiction," the paper said. The demons of OxyContin possession were described: "'Once they get hold of you, you do anything it takes to get more,' said [the bank robber] 46, a former motorcycle shop service manager."<sup>42</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

The report went on: again, the "euphoria" of OxyContin ("more popular than cocaine or heroin") was mentioned. "Users grind up the tablets and snort the powder, or mix it with water and inject it like heroin. The drug is more popular than cocaine or heroin because it produces a high that is more euphoric than other narcotics, said [a prosecutor]." Demon OxyContin turns normal people into bank robbers and prostitutes, experts stress. "In addition to a spate of deaths, authorities report an accompanying increase in crime, such as robberies of pharmacies, residential burglaries and bank heists, as users steal to feed their addictions."<sup>43</sup>

Another paper described a police raid where OxyContin was found. "[The OxyContin] raid commenced about 9:30 p.m. . . . a pit bull bit two SWAT members on the leg; inside, officers found a half-dozen people, some with needles hanging from their arms."<sup>44</sup> The report even mentioned OxyContin candy: "Initially, users simply swallowed the time-release pills or crushed and ate them. But Prince William police say some addicts now dissolve the pills in water and inject the drug like heroin, while others prefer to inject a rare liquid form. Detectives also have found OxyContin 'lollipops.'"<sup>45</sup>

"Expert: Hard-core Drug Abuse Rampant," screamed another headline. The article linked demon OxyCnatin and demon heroin: "Where you find OxyContin abuse, you probably will encounter heroin as well, an addiction specialist told a group of residents Thursday. 'Where there's Oxy around there's heroin; there's no distinction . . . Its significance in Maine cannot be underestimated.'"<sup>46</sup>

An Ohio paper told similar tales of sinister OxyContin addictions. "A former magazine photographer says his addiction to the prescription painkiller OxyContin drove him to rob drugstores -- and landed him in prison. 'It's like the purest form of heroin I've ever done.'"<sup>47</sup>

Politicians compete with one another to describe Oxy's demonic hold on victims in religious and mythic terms. "Angel Of Life And Death . . . police may have to grapple with crime and addiction caused by a drug that [chief prosecutor] Mark Earley has called both an angel of life when used appropriately and an angel of death when abused."<sup>48</sup>

One article in a Colorado paper identified OxyContin as the "Heroin Of



## Drug War Propaganda

The Hollows," a reference to the patent oxycodone pill's supposed lure in rural areas, and an attempt to utilize the technique of *transfer*. ("Another technique is called *transfer*, which involves associating a partisan cause [more police power to 'fight' oxycodone] with values and symbols [heroin fiends] . . . Transfer can also be used in the negative sense by identifying the enemy with evil symbols."<sup>49</sup>)

Still, when someone offered her a yellowish 40 milligram pill, she took it, chopped it up and snorted it. It was the start of a three-day binge, and *she was hooked*. . . .

Over the next year, *her habit grew* until she was taking up to eight '40s' a day, she says. . . .

"When I got down to two, I started panicking," she says. "I had to get out and buy some more." . . .

Across the region, people have *overdosed* on the powerful prescription painkiller and *robbed* pharmacies and family members to feed their habits.

"If this was an infectious disease, the Centers for Disease Control would be in here in white vans," says Tim Rutledge. "*There's no doubt it's very much a plague*." . . .

*"Oxy rolls in. It's so powerful, it just lays waste."*

*"This is a nuclear bomb,"* adds Gregory Wood, a health fraud investigator with the U.S. attorney's office in Roanoke, Va. "I was a cop in Detroit and saw crack come through the ghettos, and I've never seen anything like this." . . .

OxyContin found its way here about five years ago. What started as a gentle rain soon turned into *a flash flood*. . . .

"It seems like if you're around people who are doing it, you catch it," says Judy Compton, manager of the Compton Inn. "*It's contagious*." . . .

Now it's all gone. The BMW? Traded for OxyContin. The

## Drug War Propaganda

trailer? Sold for a few thousand dollars' worth of pills. The husband? Found slumped over in the bathroom with a needle nearby, dead of a suspected Oxy overdose. . . .<sup>50</sup>

The article on the oxycodone pill, entirely typical of similar "OxyContin" horror stories, plays heavily upon the theme of demonizing the oxycodone users. Oxy fiends are, we are told by the experts; hooked, with growing habits, panic when their pill supply gets low; users who overdose and steal. Officials have no "doubts" the patent oxycodone pill is a plague, a nuclear bomb, worse than demon ghetto crack, a flash flood, and highly contagious. Such OxyContin accounts epitomize the theme of this chapter.

The oxycodone feature continued, telling how an ordinary young woman was changed into a thieving OxyContin addict.

She started experimenting with drugs. Along came Oxy.

At one point, Joyce Compton says her daughter was raiding the family's motel for televisions, microwaves, mattresses, to supply her habit. Judy Compton stopped letting her come to her house.

"She'd get up to leave and my stuff would fall out of her pantlegs," she says.

From a jail cell in nearby Logan, where she is serving time for violating home confinement to seek drugs, Jeanie says she thinks she's ready to get serious about kicking Oxy.

"I've said I'm either going to end up in jail or dead," she says. "Well, I made it to the jail. I can't come back from the grave."<sup>51</sup>

Faithful officials and authorities stress there can be "no doubt" over the accounts that government authorities give concerning demon oxycodone.

Another typical report of the "alarming" "epidemic" of demon oxycodone related the concerns of authorities and government police.

## **Drug War Propaganda**

OxyContin's illicit use has been growing not only in places like Picayune, where authorities suspect OxyContin overdoses in eight more deaths, but traveling at an alarming pace across the Southeast. Since January 1999 at least 12 people in northeast Alabama, 39 in Virginia and 59 in eastern Kentucky died from OxyContin overdoses, according to the Regional Organized Crime Information Center in Nashville. . . .

### **Possible Epidemic**

Without computerized monitoring systems in pharmacies, law enforcement authorities in Mississippi and 33 other states have a hard time telling if they have an epidemic at hand. In 1996, federal data show doctors wrote 316,000 OxyContin prescriptions nationally. By 2000, the number increased 850 percent to 5,848,000, said Mike Hargroder, a diversion investigator in Mississippi for the [government secret drug police].

"It's getting to be a very serious problem nationwide," Hargroder said. "It's spreading more in rural than urban areas, with the majority of OxyContin abusers tending to be white males and white females ranging from 25 to 40 years old."<sup>52</sup>

Still, despite the Klaxon call of warning sounded by expert, official and authority alike, not all are convinced of OxyContin's demonic prowess. For example, the Cleveland Free Times ran an piece entitled, "Oxycon Job -- The Media Made Oxycontin Drug Scare," which expanded upon observation that the "war" on oxycodone, the OxyContin "crisis", is largely creation of media.

Much of the problem with the way drug abuse is reported stems from the advent of the openly declared War on Drugs in the early 1980s, when the media signed on as a full partner in the government's effort to demonize drug use and stigmatize users. "The media presented the drug problem as a war of the holy people against the depraved people, and we haven't gone far past that moralizing tone, unfortunately."<sup>53</sup>

### **Demon MDMA**

## Drug War Propaganda

MDMA (Ecstasy, X) is a terrible scourge upon the land, turning users of this drug into pithed shells, living only for their next rave. The answer to this crisis threatening our children, say government officials, is of course more government power; permanent revocation of traditional rights held by citizens. This is, authorities explain, merely to save the children from the epidemic of demon MDMA.

MDMA, say experts, attracts our children, as fish are attracted to a shiny lure, unaware of the devil's deadly hook. "Ecstasy's Lure Masks Danger," shouted one headline, representative of the MDMA genre of scare stories. Government police, a pliant press reports, say MDMA use is increasing. "[E]cstasy's presence and popularity continues to grow nationwide: [use of MDMA] increased among 10th- and 12th-graders nationwide. For the first time, its use among 8th-graders grew, according to [an important-sounding government "survey"]". . . [Government police claimed seizing] 9.3 million ecstasy tablets in 2000, compared to 400,000 three years earlier, according to available [government] statistics. [Government] authorities arrested former Mafia hitman Sammy 'The Bull' Gravano for allegedly running an ecstasy ring in Arizona that distributed 25,000 pills a week, worth \$500,000 on the street."<sup>54</sup> "ECSTASY USAGE EXPLODED IN 1990'S," reported another paper. "In 1993, according to the [government,] police seized fewer than 200 Ecstasy pills in the United States. In 1999, the number grew to more than 12 million. Many of those pills have made their way West and into rural and suburban areas after years of concentration in major urban centers on the East Coast."<sup>55</sup> Nine million, twelve million: what's a few million MDMA pills among cooperating government agencies, anyway? The chorus chanted by officials, experts and authorities: the use of MDMA is exploding!

The government chorus is repeated. Use of MDMA, says government, is a great flood, is an epidemic, is turning our children into brain-dead zombies. "An official with [a local police] Narcotics Enforcement Team . . . described Ecstasy as 'an up and coming drug. . . with the younger crowd going to DJ parties,' the [government] agent said. [Police claimed] much of the drug . . . is used at all-night parties, or 'raves,' which pop up in the county about every other month."<sup>56</sup> (Implicitly: the hated ravers are to blame.<sup>57</sup>)

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Authorities tumble over one another in grasping for superlatives with which to illustrate the increased use of MDMA. "Ecstasy, known variously as 'a year of Prozac in one pill' and 'penicillin for the soul,' is being popped by a wide cross-section of Americans -anywhere from 2 to 7 percent of the population. 'It appears the Ecstasy problem will eclipse the crack-cocaine problem we experienced in the late 1980s,' a cop told the Richmond Times-Dispatch last summer."<sup>58</sup> Images of crack addicts and crack houses are used by government to garner support for more government power.

Another paper presented another government pronouncement on MDMA. "[A government agency dedicated to the proposition that all use of a forbidden drug is 'abuse'] recently posted a nationwide bulletin saying the popularity of club drugs is rising at an 'alarming' rate and that 'no club drug is benign. . . . Chronic abuse of MDMA, for example, appears to produce long-term damage to serotonin-containing neurons in the brain,' the warning said. 'Given the important role that the neurotransmitter serotonin plays in regulating emotion, memory, sleep, pain, and higher order cognitive processes, it is likely that MDMA use can cause a variety of behavioral and cognitive consequences as well as impairing memory.'"<sup>59</sup>

### **Demon Heroin**

Heroin, (smack, horse, etc.) is a terrible scourge upon the land, turning users of this drug into sickly wraiths, living only for their next dose. Said to be a horrible plague, the curse of heroin is sung far and wide as a destroyer of men.

"Across Michigan," one paper urgently reported, "admissions to state-funded treatment programs for heroin jumped 50 percent in the late 1990s. Heroin-related deaths have more than doubled in Wayne County over the last six years. In one Detroit detox center, about half of those treated are heroin addicts. As the heroin supply from Colombia to Michigan increases," the paper continued (mum regarding the effectiveness of US anti-drug operations in Colombia), "the drug is becoming more pure, more addictive, more dangerous. Heroin sold in metro Detroit now is five times as pure as that sold in the 1980s." The writer could not resist a little token demonization of heroin users:

## Drug War Propaganda

"Heroin users describe the drug as a warm blanket. But it's really a killer and a thief, robbing addicts of possessions, self-respect, friends, potential and, sometimes, life itself."<sup>60</sup>

Demon heroin turns humans into junk fiends, who litter "with rubbish and syringes" public areas, one paper in Australia reported of local heroin users. "[H]eroin addicts are using the underpass and creek at Canley Vale to shoot up, sleep and sometimes wash in the filthy water."<sup>61</sup> "Hells Angels Behind Drugs," shouted another headline. "Heroin is among the most addictive narcotics out there and police are concerned some dealers may be mixing it with cocaine in an effort to hook certain users."<sup>62</sup> "Heroin is not a recreational drug. It's evil -- disgusting. Nobody wants to be a heroin addict and every addict I know wants to get off the drug."<sup>63</sup>

Virulent new "strains" of heroin, say government officials, are hooking and killing our children. "But it's been only within the last five months that he has seen deaths because of a heroin overdose. [Police] officials are warning potential drug users that a new strain of heroin may have found its way into the county. To date, four known drug users have died because of it."<sup>64</sup>

In pleading for more money for government officials, one government official described a "15-year-old boy whose body was ravaged by years of heroin addiction. He was told by a resident drug counselor that the youth was unlikely to survive another month," who's "addiction to heroin was so debilitating, he was really a *walking dead*."<sup>65</sup>

A Vermont paper spoke of the "battle" government fights against demon heroin. "Combating Heroin . . . The police are on the front lines of the battle against drugs," declared the paper deftly utilizing the holy war metaphor, the theme we're examining. The medical insight of government police was praised. "[T]hey are familiar with the people and the terrible pathology that keeps them in its grip. They understand the futility of a purely punitive response to the pull of drugs. They have watched people cycle in and out of prison, and they are forced to follow the trail of crimes people commit in order to feed their habit."

Heroin, demon heroin, it was explained, was the shocking cause of the war. "The figures are inexact but shocking," continued the report.

## Drug War Propaganda

"Between 1998 and 2000 the number of arrests by the state drug task force for heroin possession or sale more than doubled - from 49 to 116. Those figures don't include arrests by other police departments." Never questioning the fundamentalist premise of prohibition, editors indicated that more (government coerced) treatment was the best battle plan. "The number of Vermonters seeking treatment has also taken off. In 2000 the number was 357. During the first six months of the new fiscal year from July to December 2000 - the number was 329. Those figures don't include Vermonters in private care or out of state. Six years ago the Health Department estimated that 2,000 Vermonters used heroin or another opiate. The doubling of arrests and treatment in the past year would suggest the number of addicts may be 4,000 or higher."<sup>66</sup>

To fight this war on demon heroin, some say, powerful antidotes must be implanted into addicts' bodies. "Dr Reece, who continues to lobby political and health authorities to recognise Naltrexone as the way to fight the 'heroin war', said Mardi had turned her life around with her will to beat her addiction."<sup>67</sup>

A Colorado report noted similar alarming increases in use of heroin. "HEROIN USE MORE THAN DOUBLES AMONG YOUTHS . . . young adults seeking treatment for heroin use has more than doubled since 1993, according to state officials." To make the heroin crisis seem more threatening to children "youth" is broadly defined: "State admissions for heroin treatment for those ages 18 to 25 rose from 148 in 1993, or 8.9 percent of total admissions, to 346 in 1999, or 16.7 percent of admissions, said [a government official]." Based on the word of experts, officials and authorities seeking increased funding and power, government authorities, officials and experts conclude that more finding and power is needed. Otherwise, says government, foul plagues shall consume the people. "Officials also noted an increase in hepatitis C among those who inject heroin. More than a third of young adults in Denver who inject heroin have the blood-borne disease."<sup>68</sup>

A Malaysian paper told of the desperation of heroin addicts at an open-air drug market. "Its notoriety as a drug addicts' haunt came into the spotlight after reports of a heroin addict who brought along his child to get his daily fix. . . A man in tattered clothes beckons cars which pass by to park near where he stands [begging] loose change from owners of

## Drug War Propaganda

the cars who park their vehicles at the roadside . . . Looking like he had not taken a bath for weeks, he said this was how he funded his heroin addiction. 'What else can I do? I have to get money to get my fix,' he said, hobbling away quickly as he saw a few people starting to gather around."<sup>69</sup>

"For Users of Heroin, Decades of Despair," a New York paper headline asserted. The ill effects of "demon" heroin were described. "Before you know it, life just passed you up," the man said. 'You lose everything. You lose your wife, you lose your family, you lose your friends . . . they just give up on you.' . . . his personal war with heroin addiction, a *demon* he had battled for decades."<sup>70</sup>

Demon heroin, which is "on the rise" officials agree, turns users into fiends. "Use Of Heroin Is On The Rise . . . [the] deep indentations in her arms tell [a] story. This 29-year-old Austin resident spent years shooting up heroin." Heroin fiends are presented as deeply degraded. "She's sat on a corner at 2 a.m. near East Seventh Street looking for heroin. She has given rides to drug dealers who laid their guns on her car's dashboard. She's injected in her bathroom before going to work as a waitress." Legions of demon heroin addicts, say experts, are dropping dead. "Ten people have died in Travis County this year from heroin-related overdoses. That's almost half the 22 overdose deaths from all drugs this year. The deaths -- four in one week in April -- are one of many indicators that the illegal drug -- most associated with dark alleys and death -- is once again on the rise in Central Texas."<sup>71</sup>

Demon heroin is corrosive and greatly contagious, authorities insist. Many anecdotes are presented by authorities as proof of this. "One night a friend persuaded her to go to a club, where she met a musician who later became her boyfriend. He was injecting heroin, and she eventually let him inject her."<sup>72</sup>

Even handling the wicked drug, officials say, can cause addiction. One paper told of a drug lab worker who became hooked handling heroin so contagious and powerful is this demonic substance. "Patrol detectives installed a hidden camera near his work area and say they documented him repeatedly taking heroin from evidence that had been sent to the crime lab. . . [the hapless victim] told detectives that he hadn't intended



## **Drug War Propaganda**

to begin using heroin, but accidentally sniffed concentrated, crystalline dust left over from an evidence test. He said there was immediate relief from his back pain, and he regularly began sniffing small amounts of heroin that he'd purified in the laboratory, documents show."<sup>73</sup>

### **Cocaine Fiends**

Cocaine (crack, coke, freebase, blow) is a terrible scourge upon the land, turning users of this drug into sickly wraiths, living only for their next dose. The struggle against this evil drug, say officials and authorities, is war. Popular images of the "cocaine fiend" go back a century.

This distinctively modern form of drug use spread to Britain during the First World War, mainly as a consequence of the large number of troops stationed in London and the restrictions on alcohol. Accounts from this period have a strangely contemporary flavour; the Soho world of nightclubs and street dealers is instantly recognisable. Cocaine parties were fashionable among young men. "Under its influence they become wild-eyed and feverishly excited, and babble out their innermost secrets to each other. Cigarettes are consumed, and so it continues from midnight to six in the morning, when quantities of brandy are served as an antidote to dull the effect of the cocaine and induce sleep, for sleep is impossible to the cocaine fiend."<sup>74</sup>

The war against cocaine and the cocaine fiend continues.

After reportedly "Seizing 88 Tons Of Cocaine," said the Coast Guard (a government department created to deter prohibition era rum-runners). The "assault" on our shores was spoken of. "'We've never had a week like this where our border has been assaulted all the way from the Bahamas to Seattle,' said Commander Jim McPherson." Government political appointees agree. "Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta praised the antidrug effort. 'Those engaged in drug trafficking are attempting to penetrate all of our borders,' he said near a Coast Guard pier, where the 8.8 tons of cocaine were stacked neatly in large blocks on wooden pallets."<sup>75</sup>

## **Drug War Propaganda**

When the evil cocaine penetrates our borders, souls are enslaved, say authorities. "Selling For Only \$10-\$20 A Rock, It Can Own The Addict's Soul . . . 'It replaces everything. It's your relationships, your love affairs, your food, your companion, your life.' . . . the voice asked, 'Would you steal for me? Leave your home for me? Die for me?' Davis listened to those intended warnings and, like Nancy Reagan's worst nightmare, she didn't hesitate: 'Yes, yes, yes. The answer to all those questions was yes.'"<sup>76</sup> "She said she used to leave her husband and two sons for days at a time to binge on drugs, including crack cocaine. . . . Ms. Williams, who has needle scars on both arms, said she's lectured her sons, ages 7 and 17, on the horrors of addiction."<sup>77</sup>

And the children, prohibitionist authorities and officials constantly remind, it is all for the children, this fight against cocaine. "'The neighbors are victims, and children are involved. We've had moms do the deal in the car right across the baby seat.' . . . Others were more desperate. One man tried to trade food stamps for rock."<sup>78</sup> Similarly, a leader of a group paying addicts \$200 to undergo sterilization justified this in the name of infants exposed prenatally to cocaine. "To all those who oppose what we do, until they are ready to step up and adopt the next crack baby born, [contrary] opinion means nothing to me."<sup>79</sup>

Although the image of the "crack baby" has been used to usher in a host of new governmental laws and police powers, some note that "the myth of the crack baby" itself may be harming children, rather than effect of cocaine per se. "Demonizing mothers and labeling the children as damaged has hurt them," noted one researcher, "Many of the mothers who bring their babies to the clinic believe their drug use has already destroyed their children's chances at being successful, she added. 'The myth of the crack baby has made an impression. I worry that it will be a self-fulfilling prophecy.'"<sup>80</sup>

### **Other Dope Fiends**

#### **Dope Addicts, Demon Drugs**

Sometimes the prohibitionist refers to no specific drug at all. Blamed are "substance abuse," "drugs" or "drug addicts" and so on.

"Addictions Slam State For Billions Every Year," asserted one paper.

## Drug War Propaganda

"The *demons* of booze, drugs and tobacco cut a devastating swath through Massachusetts every year, pushing state spending on the ravaging effects of addictions to \$2.7 billion a year, according to a [CASA] survey released yesterday. . . . 'Substance abuse is one of the major public health challenges of our time,' said [one government bureaucrat]. 'It affects every community and virtually every family. Its effects such as violence, traffic accidents, health problems, crime and the future of children are potentially devastating.'"<sup>81</sup>

"Many in this community have no idea the amount of drug activity that exists in this county," another writer lamented of the evil. "The reality is that drugs are very much alive and well . . . . Many of our youth and young adults, along with their families, are entrenched in this evil. I would venture to say that 95 percent of crimes committed are by individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol. (That includes marijuana, for those who think it is a harmless herb)." <sup>82</sup>

Because of the perniciousness and insidiousness of drugs (shout those with vested interest in the treatment industry) government forced-treatment is all the more needed, to help people. "Ninety percent of the people who need treatment do not seek it out themselves. They have to be coerced by a wife, an employer, a probation officer, a court, the police. Very few addicts wake up in the morning and say, 'I am destroying my life. I am out of control. I need help.'" <sup>83</sup>

### Epidemic

In the rhetoric of prohibition, an imagined increase in the use of drugs is termed an "epidemic". This helps to rally the troops around the cause, to whip up the populace into a frenzy, to attack the "epidemic" of drugs. Drug use is called "epidemic" so often that it is easy to skip over this propaganda as mere background noise.

"Bentonville Police Chief James Allen calls the proposed bill necessary. 'We need to try anything, because methamphetamine is a huge problem,' he said. 'It's becoming an *epidemic*.'" <sup>84</sup> Another paper: "Use of Ecstasy - a mood-altering amphetamine that typically results in high-energy euphoria - has been prevalent in Connecticut for at least five years and has reached '*epidemic*' proportions among suburban teens, college students and patrons of the all-night music and dance

## Drug War Propaganda

festivals known as 'raves.'"<sup>85</sup> Another paper: "Overdoses in *Epidemic* Proportions . . . addiction appears to be leading to the *epidemic* proportions of the use of OxyContin."<sup>86</sup>

Another report described "the growing *epidemic* of meth manufacturing in the region, and the increasingly costly toll the insidious drug has on lives, public health and the economy."<sup>87</sup> And another: "Meth Epidemic Ravaging Texas . . . The experienced speed freaks, the ones who have been abusing methamphetamine for a long time, look like skinny, nervous ghosts swallowed alive in their own clothes."<sup>88</sup>

Another report and epidemic: "Mingo Town Deals With Drug *Epidemic* . . For the last couple of months, Stanley and other residents of this Mingo County town have been grappling with what they say is a narcotic *epidemic* . . . a good percentage of the town's population of 456 has developed an appetite for OxyContin, a potent opiate used to treat pain."<sup>89</sup>

Police propagandists fall over one another in describing use of hated drugs as epidemic. "Hoping to prevent a drug crisis of potentially '*epidemic*' proportions, El Paso law enforcement and health officials met Friday at a [government secret drug police] conference to discuss the dangers of methamphetamine. . . . 'It's going to turn into an *epidemic* problem here in El Paso. We're seeing more and more meth users.'"<sup>90</sup>

A Kentucky paper reported that "Drug Arrests Show Part Of *Epidemic* . . . widespread trafficking in the synthetic morphine, which is similar in its effect to heroin. Federal prosecutors say 59 people have died from overdoses in the past 13 months in Eastern Kentucky."<sup>91</sup> A Virginia paper agreed. Epidemic it is. "New Drug *Epidemic* . . . 'The widespread illegal sale of OxyContin has created an *epidemic* of addiction and a surge in criminal behavior in Southwest Virginia,' [an elected prosecutor] wrote in a letter this week."<sup>92</sup>

When drug availability is low, authorities and experts yet worry of the epidemic's return. "Sydney is in the grip of a heroin shortage, sparking frenzied demand for methadone and detoxification treatment and rising anxiety about an overdose *epidemic* when supplies are inevitably restored."<sup>93</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

"Epidemic! Epidemic!" shout officials, experts and authorities. "Local, state and federal authorities are saying that Bradford County's methamphetamine problem is the worst it's ever been. At present, what the authorities are calling our area's methamphetamine *epidemic* is more severe than what's being experienced in any other county in Northeastern Pennsylvania." The "epidemic," reported the paper, was cause for alarm. "Quite frankly, we're downright alarmed at the situation. . . . from what the police are saying, [amphetamines have] a pretty tight hold on Bradford County."<sup>94</sup> "The drug *epidemic* is without precedent in human history," another writer likewise warned.<sup>95</sup>

The "epidemic" is such a severe crisis, say government police. This is why more money and power need to be given to police, police say. "Meth: Police, Sheriffs Lack Resources To Handle *Epidemic* Effectively," another headline read. The War against meth required more government money and power to properly attack the enemy, it was explained: "[F]ighting meth . . . 'Pierce County [police department is] the only one right now able to proactively attack,' said . . . Sgt. Roger Thompson, head of the drug enforcement unit."<sup>96</sup>

"There's no denying," a different paper declared, "that drug trafficking, abuse and addiction continue to be scourges of *epidemic* proportion, and we do need to take collective action."<sup>97</sup>

Because of the "epidemic" say government officials, more government powers are needed. "'The statistics have risen tremendously. You see it in cities, you see it in rural areas,' [a government secret drug police] operations director, said in an interview. . . . Ecstasy is 'quickly becoming one of the most abused drugs in the United States,' [a top government prosecutor] testified yesterday." Despite this, the prosecutor believed that the plague may yet be stayed. "'The damage this drug can produce is significant and long-term . . . We have an opportunity to stop this growing problem before it becomes an *epidemic*, and the proposal put forth by the commission would very much help."<sup>98</sup>

Use of the opiate heroin is epidemic in Australia, say authorities. "Australia is in the middle of a heroin *epidemic*."<sup>99</sup> Use of the opioid oxycodone is epidemic in America, say authorities. "OxyContin's illicit

## Drug War Propaganda

use has been growing not only in places like Picayune, where authorities suspect OxyContin overdoses in eight more deaths, but traveling at an alarming pace . . .Possible *Epidemic*".<sup>100</sup>

The epidemic, say experts, isn't being taken seriously enough. "It's a relatively new drug. But even in a short span it's hard to miss the ravages of OxyContin abuse. . . . 120 deaths have been linked to OxyContin overdoses. . . . We do support this suit, however, to the extent that it forces Perdue to take this *epidemic* seriously."<sup>101</sup>

"[M]any people in the prevention field," announced another prohibitionist, "are beginning to feel that really we are -- we're in an *epidemic*." The prohibitionist denied that the "epidemic" was really *war*, though. "We don't refer to it as a war,"<sup>102</sup> the prohibitionist asserted, nonetheless nicely punching the theme. Due to the "epidemic", it was then predictably concluded government do more (government classically euphemized to "community"<sup>103</sup>): "[W]e need to attack this problem in the communities on a community level."

Although secret government drug police ceaselessly chant "epidemic" in their bid for more government money and power, critics have noticed this chant sometimes wears thin. "[T]he Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) is stepping in to curb what law enforcement describes as '*epidemic* abuse' of 'poor man's heroin,' with its first-ever plan to attack abuse of a specific brand of prescription. . . . [T]he public isn't likely to applaud the DEA's heavy-handed solution [which dictates] needless bureaucratic hurdles that could limit access to other painkillers."<sup>104</sup>

## War

### Drug War For the Children

The imagery used by the prohibitionist often involves war metaphors: the *war* on drugs, the *battle* against dealers, the *fight* to keep our children drug free. This is the stock-in-trade of the prohibition propagandist. The epidemic and scourge of "drugs", says government expert, requires a war. The drug war, shout official and authority: the drug war is to save the children.

"An Unlikely Battlefield In The Drug War," a Utah paper's editorial

## Drug War Propaganda

said of Salt Lake. "[T]he drug scourge has not spared the Utah capital . . . earthly temptations, family failings and youthful rebelliousness that bedevil any community."<sup>105</sup> "Continue Fight Against Drugs," another editorial urged. Why the war? The children, of course. "The use of so-called club drugs, like ecstasy, by teen-agers is increasing almost exponentially. Heroin is making a comeback. The methamphetamine plague continues. About 6 percent of Americans use illegal narcotics. And 57 percent of addicts in the United States get no drug treatment. That's disastrous."<sup>106</sup>

"When Bill Clinton took office, there were about 12 million drug users in the United States. Had the drug war continued in the 1980s mode, that figure might be 6 million today. Instead, it is 14-plus million, and the new users are the young,"<sup>107</sup> asserted another opinion piece entitled, "Regaining The Momentum In The War On Drugs." The kids: they are the reason ever more traditional rights must be silently forked over to government police upon request. It is all for the children, say experts.

In Thailand, a "War Of Words" was said to be waged upon an officially-hated stimulant. Horrible scenes of drug war child devastation were painted.

"The lives of an estimated 12.4 per cent of Thailand's 5.4 million *students* are reported to be blighted by drugs. To *combat* this alarming trend, Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh has given anti-narcotics officers six months to produce tangible results in their *war* against drugs." Optimism runs high in the Thai drug war bunker:

"With concrete measures and concerned authorities' efficiency, I believe that anti-drug efforts should be successful in six months' . . . Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra will chair a meeting of top security officials in Thailand's drug-ravaged north this weekend to map out a *battle plan* against the narcotics *scourge*. . . . 'If we do not act decisively our country will become very weak as drugs will destroy the brains which are our future.'"<sup>108</sup> Government must wage war to save the children, say government officials.

"Task Force At War Against New Drug Threats," an Alabama paper declared. With so many new drug epidemics, scourges and wars for authorities and experts to fight, the "laser" sights of police and

## Drug War Propaganda

prosecutors were nonetheless able to turn again on a different segment of citizenry. Official descriptions were replete with war images, as well as images of corrupted children.

The "Drug Task Force already had been investigating the growing popularity of the rave scene and the drugs it inspires, when they first started hearing of teen OxyContin abuse. Smith and Reese decided to focus their collective attention like a laser on dealers that *target young people* . . . . [The] meeting, dubbed '*Operation Save Teens*' was a key *maneuver* in the *attack*."

In a novel approach, the stepped-up propaganda campaign in that area combined attacks against OxyContin with warnings regarding ravers.

"'We wanted to get the word out before anybody died,' said [one police official], 'We knew most of the parents had never heard of raves. It's the new wave, and it's going to be more and more prevalent in the next few months.'"

Concerning "the enforcement *flank*, officers at the drug task force stepped up investigations of big-time dealers of OxyContin, an extremely addictive prescription pain killer, and the so-called 'club drugs' like Ecstasy, GHB and Ketamine. . . . [One] *High School student* overdosed on OxyContin. She survived, unlike some *young people* . . . 'When that *13-year-old girl* overdosed, that put us into overdrive,' [a government police official asserted]."<sup>109</sup>

New government police powers used to heap punishments on adults for using forbidden drugs are invariably painted as a drug wartime measures, to save the children. Such excuses for additional government and police power never wear thin.

A politician, in space given him by a Florida paper, proudly hailed additional jail time for adults. "A New Tool To Combat Ecstasy Epidemic . . . Tuesday, those young people may have one more law in place to protect them," proclaimed the politician. "Starting on that date, drug smugglers banking on the Ecstasy of easy money will risk the agony of long-term incarceration," it was announced, as if "enhancing" the "sentencing" (i.e. throwing people in jail longer) had ever stopped the flow of forbidden drugs before. "In March, the [US government]



## Drug War Propaganda

enhanced penalties for crimes involving Ecstasy and other club drugs. This long-overdue move was mandated by last year's Ecstasy Anti-Proliferation Act, which I introduced after learning about the deaths of several young Floridians who had taken the drug," it was declared. The epidemic attacking the children was the pretext offered for the new government powers and punishments. "This was a crucial move against what has become a deadly epidemic across the country," announced the politician, pretending that such "crucial moves" had ever once stopped the "epidemic." The propaganda war for children was the reason for it all, the politician explained: "But *the battle literally for the hearts and minds of America's young people* is far from over. The most intransigent enemy is the persistent myth that Ecstasy is safe."<sup>110</sup> Reifying a "persistent myth" into a deadly "enemy," the politician carefully avoided explicit details of jail.

No need to startle the herd. Ratchet up "penalties." Minimize the unpleasant details of incarceration; instead, stress "the battle literally" for "young people."

"Younger Generation At Stake In War on Drugs," another editorial reminded. "[S]tudents are also regularly using heroin, dangerous inhalants, designer drugs such as ecstasy, crack cocaine and other narcotics that could lure them into addiction and destroy their lives. . . . authorities say a methamphetamine *epidemic* is gripping many residents, including *teen-agers* who have been known to not only use the drug, but to manufacture and distribute it as well."<sup>111</sup>

"The bottom line," the editor had determined, "is that the war on drugs is something we as a society must dedicate ourselves to fighting. It's a fact," the editor went on, "that drug addiction ruins marriages, causes job loss, destroys relationships with family and friends, leads people into a life of crime and can result in fatal overdoses." (No attempt made, of course, to separate the effects of prohibition from the effects of drugs themselves.) "We believe," the editor continued, "that the war on drugs is worth fighting in order to save people of all ages from such a fate."<sup>112</sup>

The editorial, entirely representative of such "war to save kids from the drug epidemic" rhetoric proceeded, laden heavily with war imagery.

## Drug War Propaganda

The kids, they are the reason, it was stressed again. Like an endlessly repeating Frank Capra film, prohibitionists are forced to explain their pat rationale for *Why We Fight*, over and over.

When most of us think of the *war* on drugs, images of Drug Enforcement Agency raids in big cities and Central American soldiers destroying drug-producing plants might be the first images that come to mind.

In reality, the *war* on drugs is not something going on a world away or in urban America.

It's being *fought* right here in rural America and Smalltown USA.

It's being *fought* by parents, teachers, guidance counselors, school officials and rehabilitation experts as well as the kids themselves.

And it's worth *fighting* because it's not just about putting drug dealers behind bars.

It's about *saving our younger generation*, so *our boys and girls* will be able to build a brighter future and make the world a better place.

The *war* on drugs therefore must be *fought* and must be *won*.<sup>113</sup>

For the children, cry tear-stained experts and authorities, we must battle and war against drugs (meaning: jail more adults, longer). This shall save our children from the epidemic!

"No Easy Solutions In Fighting The *War* on Drugs," another editorial proclaimed. The classic least of evils technique was used to explain the government desire for more power. The children, it was said, they are the reason for the war. "Declaring *war* on drug dealers isn't a new concept," the editorial elaborated. "In fact, [our local politician], who, on Thursday staged a press conference at a graveyard to drive the point home, has himself previously decried the drug violence that is responsible for the deaths of many of Chester's *young* people."

## **Drug War Propaganda**

Apparently, the writer felt a need to explain the constant, repetitive propaganda barrage: "But it is a drum worth banging again and again as attested to by the unrelenting rate of death due to drug-related activity in the small city."<sup>114</sup> Because of modern-day Al Capones, defending their turf for the selling of government-prohibited substances, more prohibition is indicated, say wise experts and authorities.

### **Drug War Should be Escalated**

The problem with the war on drugs, say gung ho drug warriors, is that it has never been fought. (With disturbing regularity, this means prohibitionists have set their sights on some remnant of freedom in a given nation's laws.) The drug war needs to be escalated, say staunch prohibitionists.

"I want to escalate the war on drugs," announced John Ashcroft a top Bush administration appointee for a national police department (the Department of *Justice*). "We haven't done what we have to do. The war on drugs requires leadership."<sup>115</sup> 'More! More of the same!' is the continual battle cry of drug warriors.

While, perhaps conceding need for changes here and there, is not the fight (to jail adults for taking forbidden plants) most noble? "The drug war constitutes a worthy cause meriting greater resources and intensified effort."<sup>116</sup>

Another paper explained how regaining "The Momentum In The War On Drugs" was to be accomplished.

"What was done in the 1980s can be done again. If the new President Bush will fight illegal drugs with the same commitment and force that his father did," he will have the same results, did the editor suppose? No. Just the opposite. Results are irrelevant. Instead, what is important, say authorities and experts, is that Our Leader shall enjoy "the overwhelming support and appreciation of people in America and across the world."

The propaganda value of political leaders' choices is all-important, when it comes to the war on drugs, it was explained. "Bush sent a good signal when he chose the tough drug fighter John Ashcroft as his

## Drug War Propaganda

attorney general. Now he must bring on a like-minded drug czar and get back to winning the war."<sup>117</sup>

Stock phrases like "tough drug fighter" nicely euphemize away unpleasant thoughts of losing traditional rights, and distract the reader from distasteful associations and comparisons with other police states. None of that. Instead, our hero's just a "tough drug fighter."

"The Drug War Worked Once -- It Can Again," asserted the headline of a column written by William Bennett in the Wall Street Journal. "We must re-engage this fight,"<sup>118</sup> commanded Bennett. Lashing out at those who may disagree, Bennett said that intent of the drug warriors makes up for lack of results and lost rights: "Their dedication gives the lie to the gospel of futility." Those other politicians, the partisan Bennett knows, it is they who are at fault for refusing to fight the fight to the exacting standards of Bennett's political party. Failing to mention that more citizens than ever are jailed for using drugs, Bennett pressed for more of the same: "I look forward to America re-engaging in the war on drugs -- and continuing the success that we had between 1980 and 1992."<sup>119</sup>

The former Drug Czar and admitted nicotine addict Bennett went on with his drug war renewal plans: "In renewing the drug war, the new drug czar will not be alone. He will be able to draw on the assistance of people -- parents, teachers, substance-abuse counselors, clergymen and elected officials -- who have continued to fight drug use over the past eight years. These groups are our first lines of defense."<sup>120</sup> 'The war must be escalated! Total war for total victory!' scream zealous drug warriors.

*More, chant prohibitionists. Escalate, and victory shall be ours! "Will Bush Take Lead In Drug War?" asked one editorial. The editor (veteran prohibitionist A. M. Rosenthal) defended his use of the term "drug war". War it is, he said. "Bush has finally chosen a new chief of the White House anti-drug office -- John Walters, a former deputy director for drug policy under William Bennett, the first and most passionate of what used to be called drug czars. (The federal government and the press no longer consider that title politically correct, nor the term drug war, but I do -- very correct.)" Using a stool*

## Drug War Propaganda

example, Rosenthal assessed the situation. The new political appointee, the top ONDCP bureaucrat, was praised because he (Walters) "understands fully that winning the war means putting money and personnel, lots of both, into law enforcement, the interdiction of illegal narcotics and drug therapy -- a stool not with one leg, but three."<sup>121</sup> The drug war is a stool, says Rosenthal, thus proving government needs more money and power to "win" the war. Escalate and we will win, claim prohibitionists.

Another writer editorialized also about the top ONDCP bureaucrat appointee. The problem, it was determined, was the "wrath" of critics of current policy: "Their wrath is aimed at a man who understands what it takes to *win*: a strong combination of interdiction, law enforcement, education, prevention and, yes, effective treatment. No one policy can replace the other -- all are required."<sup>122</sup> We can "win", say drug warriors, if only government were given more power.

"How Can We Win Some More Ground?" rhetorically asked another editor, in the "War On Drugs?" Once again, critics of present drug policy were singled out. "It has become fashionable in elite circles to claim that the United States is losing the War on Drugs when the truth is that we may be *winning* some battles." Not certain of victory, the "truth" was nonetheless enthusiastically declared: we *may* be winning *some*. The editor suggested that the battle be brought home: "If it is *fought* where it should be -- at the dinner table -- this '*war*' is still *winnable*, and this is no time for *retreat*."<sup>123</sup>

### Drug War -- Mythic, Poetic

Often the government efforts targeting users of forbidden drugs, the so-called "war" on drugs, is described in poetic, grandiose terms. Legendary, mythical epic battles are recalled. The war on drugs, say drug warriors, is the most noble cause: a struggle of light over darkness, of good over evil. Like Odysseus, drug warriors force errant lotus-eaters back to servitude. Like King Saul who prohibited people from eating until his permission was given, drug warriors insist on unquestioning obedience.

One typical article depicted the "Battlefield In The Drug War." "Widespread plague . . . the meth plague has cut across the socio-

## Drug War Propaganda

economic spectrum."<sup>124</sup>

"There is not one affection of society that is not created or worsened by the use of psychoactive and addictive substances," another writer declared. "The scourge of drugs should be likened to the Bubonic Plague and treated accordingly. This plague was not eradicated by tending to the sick and dying. It was eradicated by killing the rats that carried the deadly fleas."<sup>125</sup>

"Abuse In America -- The War On Addiction," another article euphemized. Such softens the persecution of people and the hurt inflicted on them by government, into the *glittering generality* of vague attacks on an abstract "addiction." "INNER DEMONS," the article went on to ominously warn. Saying perhaps more than was intended about current reporting on "drugs", the article continued: "The master narrative of public life these days seems to be all about abuse and recovery, with inner demons replacing outer enemies or forces of nature as the dramatic foils of choice."<sup>126</sup>

"The drugs problem is severe, which is why we have to declare war on it," a Thai official proclaimed. "As the two-day brainstorming session began, Thaksin likened himself to the 'conductor of an orchestra, trying to find harmony in the fight against drugs so we can win the war for the people of our nation.'"<sup>127</sup> Turning from war metaphors, to musical, then to medical metaphors, the official elaborated. "This is like a cancer that will further spread and destroy the whole body," the Thai leader dramatized. "We have to think that this is the vital mission of the country and it is a war," he said. "This is a meeting for mapping out the right strategy in a holistic approach."<sup>128</sup>

"Government Considering Speedy Executions Of Drug Convicts," a Malaysian paper said of a new Thai policy. In the battle of good over evil, say drug warriors, are not all means justified by the demonic wickedness of the enemy? "The prime minister has ordered the launching of all measures to cripple drugs syndicates and to stop the drug flow into Thailand," a Thai general announced. "Police will follow a new strategy of 'decrease consumption, cut off traffickers and destroy the producers' . . . [drugs have] invaded into all sectors of our society."<sup>129</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

"Weapons Bazaar For The Drug War," a paper reported. "We have to have the technology to combat this *evil* of drug trafficking," Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske reportedly said.<sup>130</sup>

Chafing at the success of a recent film on drug trafficking, an editor of a Florida paper counterattacked, headlining instead the "Drug Dealers And Their War On People." The editor explained the need for loss of constitutional rights and other harsh measures: "While many Americans are questioning the nation's ongoing effort against drugs, the situation in east Tampa, as described by [our reporter] reveals why there must be a strong [police] component if *victory* is to be achieved. . . . To believe that the war against drug dealers is futile is also to believe the communities they *terrorize* have no future."<sup>131</sup> If one believes that any given "community" has a future, confidently asserted the editor, then the only reasonable course of action is to support current government policy.

The most powerful political figure in the United States (the president) spoke of the epic struggle against forbidden drugs and their users. In "The War on Drugs," Bush announced the appointment of a new head for a government anti-drug bureaucracy (the ONDCP). "[T]he federal government is *waging an all-out effort*," proclaimed Mr. Bush. His shall be an "unwavering commitment to stop drug use," for "the most important work to reduce drug use is done in America's living rooms and classrooms, in churches and synagogues and mosques." That is because, Bush claimed, "over time drugs rob men, women and children of their dignity and of their character. Illegal drugs are the *enemies of innocence and ambition and hope*." (Bush did not explain why, if "drugs" were the "enemy", his fellow countrymen were the ones imprisoned. The drugs are destined to be burnt or consumed in any event.) Forbidden drugs "undermine people's commitment to their family and to their fellow citizens," declared Bush. "[W]hen we push back," (instead of responding like a squeezed balloon, bulging into some other area) "the drug problem gets smaller," said Bush.

Other political leaders consider, also, their stratagems in the war.

"Johanns Plans *War On Drugs* . . . Gov. Mike Johanns said his *three-pronged attack* in the *war* on drugs put Nebraska in great shape for

## Drug War Propaganda

upcoming *battles*. . . . [T]his year's new programs will make a significant difference in the *war* against drugs." More government power, promises government: that will win the war.

"These programs *attack* the drug problem on three sides," the politician promised of more government. "Through intervention, enforcement and treatment we can make a difference. . . . We can *win* more *battles* for the lives of Nebraskans in this drug *war*." Politicians act as though people have never heard the same drug war promises before. "Col. Tom Nesbitt, head of the State Patrol, added that tougher penalties for users and distributors of methamphetamine, more troopers, advanced training and participation in the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program are all parts of Nebraska's stepped-up *attack* on drugs."<sup>132</sup> More government power, punishment and money. that will "win" the "war", say government officials.

Because of the epic war on drugs, police officials cry, government must move outside of the democratic process, eschewing debate for "action."

The "*All-Out War On Drugs*" was described. One police chief "called for a special joint sitting of Parliament to set new priorities in the *war* against drugs. [The police official] challenged the state's politicians to take politics out of the debate -- and blamed the political process for failing to turn the tide of drug abuse." Allowing people to debate the issue, the police official state, that is the problem. "We've had the debate . . . let's get on with some action,' [the government police official] told the Herald Sun."<sup>133</sup>

The police official declared "the political process was 'no longer appropriate for dealing with the critical issue of drug abuse'," because, "limitations of the political party system had effectively stymied progress in *combating* drugs and an independent authority was the best way to remove the issue from the political battlefield."<sup>134</sup>

### War Metaphor

Still, while police, prosecutor, and politician cry "war!", not everyone is so persuaded. Noted one senior U.S. district judge, of the so-called "war" on drugs: "Polls now show 65 percent of the public believe that war is lost. No wonder that government spinmasters are frantically



## **Drug War Propaganda**

searching for a new name so the war can be declared over and the game continue under the mantle of a different metaphor!"<sup>135</sup>

Noted another student of prohibitionist rhetoric:

In order to capitalize on the unifying spirit and goodwill engendered by that righteous sort of entanglement, American politicians have, since President Lyndon Johnson, used the word "war" to gain a backing for their political programs and social schemes. . . .

Take just the drug war. In a war, there's no such thing as due process before depriving a man of life, liberty or property - as required by the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. Which is more than understandable. It's a war, after all. Hardly any time to go requesting warrants and worrying about protecting the liberties of your opponents.<sup>136</sup>

One paper in Texas conceded that the war metaphor was not terribly useful. "Officials must admit the 'war' in its current form is not winnable. What do we mean by the 'war on drugs,' anyway? The whole concept of declaring war on an inanimate object is ridiculous. You can't defeat drugs' army. You can't occupy drugs' capital city. You can't force drugs to surrender."<sup>137</sup>

### **Children Victims of Fiends**

"Nothing can so excite an adult population as can anything which appears to threaten their own children."<sup>138</sup> It is the children, this prohibition theme so often reminds us, that suffer corruption at the hands of dope fiends. Sometimes we are shown that children themselves are turned into fiends.

"Teens Hooked On Pot," an Australian headline shouted. "What we found was more use at an earlier age and that there was a substantial number of students and adults using [cannabis] on a regular basis," one drug expert explained. The researcher asserted exactly "72 per cent of 20-year-olds using marijuana daily reported clinical signs of addiction to the drug." The symptoms, highly unusual for adolescents, "included irritability, conflict with others, feeling out of sorts," as well as a desire

## Drug War Propaganda

to purchase cannabis.<sup>139</sup>

"Student Drug Use Called 'Crisis'," a Florida headline revealed. The crisis was described: a "recent survey reveals alcohol, tobacco and drug use in [local] schools is higher than the state average."

"One-tenth of . . . County middle school students went to school drunk or high during the past school year," the paper revealed of the crisis of child corruption, "and one-third of high school students have tried an illicit drug other than marijuana, according to a recent study that shows [area] teens use alcohol, drugs and tobacco at a rate higher than the state average."<sup>140</sup> The article did not mention the effect of DARE and other "drug prevention" government indoctrination programs in abating the "crisis."

The article continued. At last, it was let slip that the report was a "study" conducted by government ("the Florida Department of Children and Families"), with a sample size of only 1,200. Predictably, "law enforcement and health officials . . . expressed surprise at the county's elevated results." The results indicated a terrible crisis. "To me, this is a crisis for us," declared one government police officer. "There is an unequivocal need for us to do something more."<sup>141</sup> Because of the crisis, say government officials, government therefore needs more power; government must "do something more."

A paper in Washington State told how children were often corrupted. "Parents Nurturing Child Drug Use, Experts Say." Experts described the process: "Children who grow up with parents addicted to alcohol or drugs are more likely to be physically or sexually abused, and less likely to develop good social or coping skills or self-esteem." This was known because, experts contended, "Break a drunk's bottle, and you get hit."<sup>142</sup>

A New Zealand paper likewise told of children corrupted into (illegal) amphetamine fiends. "Methamphetamine - poor man's cocaine -- is creating headaches for police who yesterday expressed concerns at the highest level about the drug's widespread use." A government police spokesman told a governmental "law and order committee that he did not think police were *winning the battle* against the drug commonly known as speed." The children, authorities asserted, were being

## **Drug War Propaganda**

corrupted: "In the last three or four years there has been a steady upward trend in terms of the amount of that product in and around the market for our young people."<sup>143</sup>

A California paper related the concerns of government officials. Mothers, it was declared, were becoming drug fiends, and ruining their children. A government official, it was said, "has struggled to understand the lure of a drug so strong it makes mothers abandon their young." Mothers had been converted into craven drug fiends: "We had a [court] conference with a medical doctor who explained how long-term drug use can change the structure of the brain, the way it processes joy, comfort, happiness, contentment."<sup>144</sup>

Another Australian paper told of yet more drug-dangers to children. "Nearby residents reported finding used syringes, spoons, material which appeared to be stained with blood, and condoms in an area frequented by children and people walking dogs."<sup>145</sup> Children are corrupted by the very carelessness of drug fiends, we are reminded.

A Missouri paper relayed further police justifications for imprisoning drug users. The fiendish depravity of drug-addled patients, and the corruption of children was stressed. The drug warrior "spoke of drugs, values and children . . . He remembered a meth lab in Lee's Summit where a mother was carrying a baby on her hip, smoking a cigarette and cooking meth. The cigarette could have ignited the poisonous fumes and caused an explosion. . . . Or there was the Raytown meth lab, where a hungry toddler crawled to eat food out of a dog's bowl. The dog growled at the child, who cringed and ate the food anyway. The mother just watched."<sup>146</sup>

### **Mythic Symbols of Good and Evil**

Religious and mythological symbols of good and evil are very useful in demonizing prohibited or targeted drugs. Drugs (declared illegal by politicians) are said to be as the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Thus, declare police and prosecutor, "illegal" drugs are sinful to use. It is therefore the duty of government, declare unselfish government officials and authorities, to cast out the hated drug user from the garden of society (or rather, to jail and enslave the drug user for profit). As Adam and Eve were beguiled by the devil, so (asserts a government

## Drug War Propaganda

deeply respecting an establishment of religion), have drug users been demonically beguiled and possessed.

Like Prometheus, drug 'dealers and users' distribute fiery, powerful, forbidden substances to Man. Like Zeus, government officials and authorities boom out in Olympian tones that only government gods may distribute drugs. Like Prometheus, drug users must be eternally chained and punished for their sins against authority. Like Pandora, drug users are a scourge to mankind. In their ignorance and depravity, users of forbidden substances open a Pandora's Box, loosing swarms of evil plagues upon the people.

Drug users are variously described as fallen, demons, fiends, vampires, heartbreaking little imps, miserable craven slaves, no better than animals.

"Nobody plans to become a addict . . . It's time we stop telling ourselves lies and get away from all uses of drugs. When we were little kids we enjoyed life without any chemical aids," as one writer put it. "Adam and Eve were told not to eat a certain fruit, because everything in the garden was not for their use; the same applies to us."<sup>147</sup>

"Drugs Put These Hearts In Chains," a headline lamented. Drugs were said to turn good children into imps. "When drugs rule, they ruin lives by burning out the core of those involved, rendering an empty shell, turning bright eyes into sneaky eyes and smiles into smirks. Drugs trample love in trade for money and crush those hearts that care."<sup>148</sup>

"There are still people out there who make money off of people's misery and death. And they're out there poisoning our children and families,"<sup>149</sup> another prosecutor explained.

"Drug dealers are bloodsuckers who prey on the vulnerability of others, so now we're going to take their blood money off them," a police official revealed.<sup>150</sup>

One US government official crowed about the results of pressure applied to the Afghani government. "He was told by farmers that 'the Taliban used a system of consensus-building.' They framed the ban 'in very religious terms,' citing Islamic prohibitions against drugs, and that

## **Drug War Propaganda**

made it hard to defy, he added. Those who defied the edict were threatened with prison."<sup>151</sup>

Adults must always be imprisoned for smoking marijuana. Otherwise, say drug warriors, flaming sword in hand, the fallen shall be condemned to living the degraded lives of beasts. "Once this 'gateway drug' to stronger drugs is opened, those depend(ent) on drugs, will behave no better than animals, selling themselves and their families, and becoming slaves to the master who controls the drugs."<sup>152</sup>

### **Legalization Unleashing Epidemic of Fiends**

The rhetoric of prohibition constantly insists "drugs" must never be "legalized". The propagandist may assert that if "drugs" were to be "legalized", then an epidemic of drug use and misery would surely be the result. The "war on drugs" (that is to say mainly, the jailing of adults who use marijuana), must therefore be continued and enhanced as the proper course of action.

"I am tired of hearing the oft-repeated lie that the war against drugs has failed," declared one supporter of the war. "It has not failed. Drug laws are a deterrent for many against abuse. Lots of people obey the law for the law's sake, or in fear of the penalties." Otherwise, uncertainty might result: "I don't want a world that has more people under the influence of who knows what."<sup>153</sup>

Seemingly arbitrary figures may be used to illustrate the rising tide of drug abuse, and the need for continued warring. "If we aren't in a war on drugs, we certainly should be. The United States will spend \$17.5 billion this year trying to contain a scourge that is costing the nation nearly \$300 billion a year, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of lost and decimated lives. . . . it is time to double or even triple our effort in the war on drugs."<sup>154</sup>

"While America's frustration with the drug war is understandable," another writer explained, "it's unfortunate that many seem to be calling for surrender, either in the form of legalization of now-illegal drugs or a limited, more politically palatable capitulation in the form of decriminalization of drug use."<sup>155</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

One Canadian editorial explained why we fight. The government struggle to incarcerate users of drugs, is "A War Worth Fighting," say government officials. "The war on drugs should end in victory, not surrender."<sup>156</sup> "I don't see why marijuana should be decriminalized when we already have enough of a problem with alcohol and other legal drugs," stated one police official, leading a "task force" that raids homes suspected of having cannabis plants. "If we legalize marijuana, we open too many doors that lead to abuse . . . and one-quarter of teenage boys say they are regular marijuana users."<sup>157</sup>

Legalization is "surrender", cry drug warriors. "The new 'drug czar' is being asked to lead the nation's war on illegal drugs at a time when many are urging surrender," another prohibitionist claimed. "The forms of surrender are manifold: Buzzwords like 'harm reduction' are crowding out clear no-use messages. State initiatives promoting 'medical marijuana' are little more than thinly veiled legalization efforts . . . [One movie] portrayed the war on drugs as a futile effort. . . . 74% of Americans believe the war on drugs is a failure,"<sup>158</sup> he wailed. "We must, and will, continue our vigilant defense of our borders and our streets against" sellers of forbidden drugs, nodded one US Senator.

159

Another writer urged that drugs not be "legalized". The matter of jail or prison was skipped. Included were graphic descriptions of demonic druggie depravity: "It is very rare to see an abuser clean up. The percentage is small. Most of them die. Some take their children with them. I have executed search warrants where whatever crumbs are left over, the poor child has to battle rats and cockroaches for. The filth is overwhelming! You enter and the odor of ammonia almost knocks you over."<sup>160</sup>

"[W]e must redouble our efforts to prevent the drug plague from making further inroads into our most precious resource, our young people," the editorial urged. The plague is too great to countenance "legalized" drugs, it was stated. "There will be those who will claim that if we legalized drugs and took away the stigma against their use and abuse that all of our society's problems would magically disappear. . . . Drug use helped deaden those involved to a callous disregard for the consequences of their actions. It's a lesson that should

## Drug War Propaganda

not be lost lest this tragedy be repeated."<sup>161</sup>

"New Artillery For Drug War," urged another headline. What was the action suggested? Something. Anything. War! Anything, except for legalization, that is. "Close up the borders, and put the Army there to minimize corruption and give the DEA and border patrol guards extra help. The answer to the drug problem is not legalization. With 16 percent of the jail population committing crimes to get drug money, legalizing drugs is simply a way to encourage criminal acts for drugs that are widely and freely available. Besides, if drugs are legalized, there is less incentive for them to quit." Usefully lumping all different substances together, the editor explained why "drugs" must never be "legalized": an epidemic of harmful fiends and irrationality would be unleashed upon the land. "People who are on drugs do not act in rational manners, they will cause more harm on society if they are legally allowed wander around on them. There must be one goal in the War on Drugs, and that is to stop people from taking them."<sup>162</sup>

### Summary

We have examined some of the ways that the propaganda of prohibition exploits symbols of good and evil. Drug users, proclaims the propaganda of prohibition, are wicked fiends and debauching demons. Drugs (declared illegal by politicians) are scourges on nations and peoples. In place of the "demon rum" that so worried prohibitionists in times past, the modern prohibition propagandist is concerned with demon meth, demon oxycodone, demon MDMA, demon heroin and crack. The prohibitionist need not be too specific; all "drugs," says the propagandist, are wicked, evil.

The illicit use of drugs (say prohibitionists) is "epidemic," and government actions taken against drug users is "war." This war isn't fought to garner additional government control, nor to wrest traditional rights from citizens: no. This "war," declares the propagandist, is for the most noble of causes: this "war" (that is to say, the jailing of adult marijuana users), is fought for the children. This war will save children from a life as fiends.

Sometimes the prohibitionist will lapse into grandiose, mythical, poetic language: the drug and the drug user are depicted as the foulest of

## Drug War Propaganda

creatures, while the drug warrior is portrayed as divine savior and avenging angel.

Above all, shouts the prohibition propagandist: because of the terrible wickedness inherent in "drugs," not to mention the demonic fiendishness of drug users, "drugs" must never be "legalized". (By "drugs" the propagandist means of course and especially "marijuana," and by "legalize" the propagandist means that jail must remain an unquestioned punishment for marijuana users, when police and prosecutor find it profitable.) Otherwise, quivers the prohibitionist, if we surrender in this "war," an epidemic of drug fiends would be unleashed upon the good people of the land.

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Crack Sold Like Bubblegum

*"It is always somewhat confounding when members of academia go out of their way to pooh-pooh laws that pertain to controlled substances, more so when they whine and moan about people being incarcerated for violating those laws. Why anyone who has the credentials to stand in front of a classroom would want to promote anarchy is beyond my capacity to fathom."<sup>1</sup>*

A study of prohibitionist rhetoric reveals another repeated idea. A choice is presented. Drugs, say prohibitionists, must be totally prohibited. Otherwise, they insist, the only other option is total legalization.

The choice as they saw and presented it was total prohibition or total access to the hated drugs. It was not that other methods of controlling use did not exist or would not work; it was the idea that all usage was sinful and must be stopped. Like an ongoing morality play, this same issue gets played out repeatedly today with a new cast of characters. As bills are introduced to lower criminal penalties for various illicit drugs, one can anticipate any number of legislators standing to attack reduced penalties as an invitation for use and a first step toward legalization of drug X.<sup>2</sup>

This choice, which is a classic *false dilemma*, takes various forms. The prohibitionist often claims that unless new laws which increase government police powers are supported, then total access to the hated

## **Drug War Propaganda**

drugs would be the outcome.

At times the propagandist may even claim that any discussion of changing the laws would lead to total legalization.

To increase fear, which raises the effectiveness of propaganda, total access by children is often emphasized by the propagandist.<sup>3</sup>

### **Moral, Religious Battle for Good and Evil**

"Prohibitionists," noted researcher William White, "have always characterized themselves as being in a moral/religious battle against evil. This quality of the prohibitionist movements eliminated the option of compromise."<sup>4</sup> The prohibitionist knows that the use of substances declared illicit by politicians is, by definition, evil. This idea is often seen in the writings of drug warriors. As one state governor preached: "it is immoral, it is irreligious to use drugs."<sup>5</sup>

In a hearing in 2001, congressional drug warriors excoriated one who dared to question current drug policy. "What's really going on here is people are trying to legalize smoking marijuana and they're using cancer and AIDS patients as a prop," fumed one prohibitionist politician. Other drug warriors agreed. "This is really an effort by the druggies to legalize marijuana," insisted another congressman.<sup>6</sup> Any changes in the law that do not punish cannabis users yet more, are portrayed as "druggies," who are trying to "legalize marijuana." Reform of the law will lead to total access, say drug warriors: therefore total prohibition is all the more indicated, they suggest.

Prohibitionists fell over one another to vilify reform and despise reformers. "I don't respect Mr. Kampia . . . You're not a wonderful person. You're doing something despicable, and you're putting a nice face on it."<sup>7</sup> Said one politician of a peaceful and well-spoken reformer: "You are an articulate advocate for an evil position."<sup>8</sup>

Because, say prohibitionists, any usage of drugs (declared to be illegal) is sinful and evil, then total cessation of the evil is the only answer. Because the prohibitionist is convinced of the righteousness of his position, all who disagree thus are guilty of thinking wicked thoughts, guilty of holding "an evil position."

## Drug War Propaganda

Since drug use is sin, say drug warriors, making war on drugs (that is to say, making war on drug *users*) is the only option. Compromise with "sin" is out of the question.

"President Bush and his newly appointed drug czar say they have faith in the ability of religious organizations to treat society's ailments," one paper revealed. The sinfulness of drug use was taken as given: "In at least one sense the war on drugs resembles the church's war on sin: Final victory can never be won, but the aim of the exercise is to redeem the sinners, not to destroy their lives."<sup>9</sup> Using drugs, preach zealous drug warriors, is "sin."

In attacking calls to stop jailing cannabis users, one writer compared using marijuana to murder. "Why not argue against laws that prohibit petty theft, simple assault or even murder?" Whenever a substance is made illegal, the substance must be totally prohibited from henceforth. Otherwise, say prohibitionists, the result would be morally equivalent to "legalizing" murder! Those who question newly-minted morals (in the form of drug laws enacted by politicians), are *evil*, say prohibitionists, marching as to war. Continued one writer: "The prophet Isaiah could have been writing about the Drug Policy Forum of Texas when he mentioned those who call good evil and evil good."<sup>10</sup>

Drug users, say prohibitionists, must totally "overcome" the "Demon Spirit" of drugs (drugs declared illicit by politicians, that is). Of course, there can be no compromise with "demon spirits": total prohibition, say zealous drug warriors, is therefore the only answer. "Drug addiction is a demon spirit, and it's of Satan . . . And the only way it's going to be broken is by the power of God," sermonized one true believer, a former oxycodone user.<sup>11</sup>

Noted one researcher of prohibitionist attitudes: "These people have brainwashed themselves into believing marijuana opens the gates of Hell . . . And no matter what is said or shown to the contrary, they refuse to listen or even concede a single inch."<sup>12</sup> The religio-prohibitionist instinctively knows that he is doing service to god by eliminating the evil use of hated drug.

Unfortunately, taking this moral stance has a price which is paid by the infirm: "For [such] doctors, the prospect of addiction and its



## **Drug War Propaganda**

accompanying moral and physical decay is worse than any pain -- especially when the pain is borne by the patient. . . . It is not only an issue of law and surveillance, it is a moral one, steeped in conservative ethics and puritanical religious fervor." The prohibitionist is only saving the sufferer's soul from a fiery damnation in the afterlife, by forcing the victim to suffer all the more on earth. "It's as if it is a sin to live completely pain free," says Dr. Harvey Ginsburg, psychology professor at Southwest Texas State University . . . 'It's as if pain must be endured to enter the gates of heaven.'"<sup>13</sup>

Because drugs (declared illegal by politicians) are a demonic and wicked evil, says the zeal-filled prohibitionist, all drug use is sinful and must be totally stopped. 'Knowing' this 'fact', the clergy too, ("asked to help identify substance abusers in their congregations"), agree that use of drugs made illegal by politicians is sinful.<sup>14</sup> The clergy are simply doing god service by denouncing drug users to authorities.

Because drugs (declared illegal by politicians) are a demonic and wicked evil, says the pious prohibitionist, it would thus be wrong to examine the Bible to see if what drug warriors say is so. The "Full Gospel Assemblies does not promote the legalization of marijuana nor the use of any illegal substance," huffed one drug warrior, a minister challenged on the morality of jailing peaceful pot smokers.<sup>15</sup> The minister "does not promote the use of scripture" for seeing whether the words of prohibitionists are so. Drug warriors have already determined that using (illicit) drugs is Sin. Sin must be totally prohibited, say drug warriors. No questions asked.

### **Cannabis: Total Access or Total Prohibition**

One variation on this propaganda theme seen often is the claim that cannabis must be totally forbidden or illegal to use in all forms; if not, then the substance would therefore be legal 'like candy', and thus (children) will use cannabis without restraint. The reader is forced to side with whatever punishments, loss of traditional rights, or new government powers the prohibitionist proposes. Otherwise, the propagandist asserts, people (little children), would have total access to marijuana. Those are the only alternatives presented. Any lessening of the penalties for any aspect of growing or using the cannabis plant is

## Drug War Propaganda

unthinkable.

### Hemp as Total Legalization

Industrial hemp plants, grown for fiber, have been have been cultivated since ancient times. Planted densely, they typically grow to heights of 12 to 14 feet. In the US, hemp was cultivated from colonial times right up until the 1940s. George Washington has been quoted as commanding Americans to "Make the most of the Indian Hemp Seed and sow it everywhere." Such industrial hemp is bred for fiber, not THC content. The Chinese, Europeans, Canadians and may other cultures and nations have gown and used hemp for hundreds of years, even millennia.

Still, enthusiastic prohibitionists see danger upon the land, should farmers no longer be jailed for growing industrial hemp. Why? Because drug warriors simply *know* that all marijuana is evil and must be totally prohibited. Drug warriors *know* that any lessening of the laws for hemp would be the same as, or lead to, total access to the sinful marijuana by everyone.

Researchers must not so much as be allowed to study hemp. If researchers are not jailed for studying the hated plant, jailed as common criminals for their research, then "legalization" of marijuana would surely be the tragic result.

"The Illinois Drug Education Alliance," reported one paper, "an anti-drug citizens' group, fought to prevent passage of the bill [to study hemp], with the help of state and federal law enforcement officials who also oppose it." In describing the actions of government police to retain power, the paper gets in on the act of describing even the *study* of hemp, as "legalization."

"The alliance argues that legalization of industrial hemp could become one step toward legalizing marijuana. They also warn that legalized hemp could make it harder to enforce existing drug laws because hemp and marijuana are often hard to tell apart without chemical testing."

Total access or total prohibition. Citizens must be jailed, to make expensive tests unnecessary for law enforcement.

## Drug War Propaganda

Indeed: because government police might be put to some slight inconvenience in the rush to pack prisons with pot growers and dope smokers, farmers must likewise be assumed to be criminal, and thus always be jailed for growing the evil weed. "Anti-drug groups [claim hemp farming] opens the door to legalized marijuana. 'It would make it extremely difficult to enforce the laws we have on the books against marijuana,' . . . Someone could plant real marijuana in the middle of an industrial hemp field and law enforcement officials might not be able to tell the difference, she said."<sup>16</sup>

The paper painted prohibitionists as noble warriors protecting the children. "[W]e're fighting an agricultural hemp bill when I'm at home working with kids on substance abuse issues." As is customary, the paper left off mentioning the issue of jail. Instead, the children were repeatedly mentioned: "[T]he group will try to persuade Ryan that signing the bill 'would send the wrong message to children' about drugs."<sup>17</sup> Using similar (slippery-slope) reasoning, a politician in New Zealand likewise saw in industrial hemp farming trials a "stalking horse to a wider agenda" of cannabis legalization.<sup>18</sup>

It goes on and on, the song is sung in state legislature after legislature, with endless variations on the theme. 'Allowing hemp,' say prohibitionists, (that is to say, not arresting farmers for growing hemp) is the same as 'legalizing marijuana.' Why, to merely *study* hemp, is the same as legalizing marijuana. "'Legalize hemp and you legalize marijuana,' said Sue Dugan, director of Omaha anti-drug group PRIDE. 'Don't fall for that business of *Let's just study the use*. It's been studied.'"<sup>19</sup>

"Hemp-Legalization Bill Dies In House," a Santa Fe headline shouted, linking "hemp" to "legalization" (i.e. total access of the hated drug). The familiar refrain is sung: "A proposal to legalize the production of industrial hemp, a relative of the marijuana plant, failed in the House on Sunday amid criticism that it would be the first step in drug legalization."<sup>20</sup>

"There is ample evidence that hemp has no marketable value in this country, and the *push* to *legalize* hemp is nothing more than the first step in growing of hemp that has far greater THC capacity," bellowed

## Drug War Propaganda

one politician. "This plant has virtually no economic value to this country and has potential danger that is enormous," he warned of the hated plant.<sup>21</sup> If farmers are not arrested for growing hemp, total prohibitionists declare, then the enormous danger of total access to legalized drugs would sweep away hapless citizens.

Because of the 'message' that 'legalized' hemp would send to children, say prohibitionists, farmers must be jailed for growing it. "[T]his bill to *legalize* the growing of *marijuana* hemp in Nebraska is sending an even louder message to *our children*. [The bill] is telling Nebraska's young people that marijuana is OK."<sup>22</sup> Either hemp is totally prohibited in all forms, or children would get the wrong message, that marijuana is "OK."

The perception of "young people" (as reported by prohibitionists) is the reason for total prohibition. "I talk to many young people about the dangers of drugs. Even teens who do not use marijuana tell me they think marijuana is now an acceptable drug. They use two main arguments to explain why all marijuana ought to be legal. One is that marijuana is 'medicine,' and the second is that 'marijuana hemp' is going to save our farmers," complained one writer. The hated drug culture must be eliminated. "Our kids are bombarded by the drug culture with many of the same arguments . . . Is it any wonder that adolescent marijuana use is increasing at an alarming rate in Nebraska? Nebraska can either follow the agenda of the drug culture or we can fight for drug-free children. We cannot have it both ways."<sup>23</sup> When farmers talk of changing the law to stop arrest of hemp-growers, the prohibitionist propagandist knows it is time to talk of "marijuana" access by "children."

Hemp, must be totally prohibited in all forms, or else, states prohibitionist rhetoric, we are following "the agenda of the drug culture," (i.e. total access for the "children").

A editorial in a Kentucky paper agreed wholeheartedly: not jailing farmers for growing the hemp plant is a sinister plot. "Hemp A Cover For Legalizing Pot," trumpeted the paper. The editorialist given space in the paper, "chairwoman of Drug Watch International's hemp committee," outlined the wicked conspiracy to foist total access to

## Drug War Propaganda

hated drugs upon our tender young children.<sup>24</sup>

In Iowa, the same tactic is used by authority and newspaper alike. "IOWA LEGISLATORS CONSIDER *LEGALIZING* HEMP," proclaimed another headline. "Legalize" was punched continually to nurture associations of the dread marijuana "legalization." This is to emphasize fears of total access: "State legislators are working to *legalize* industrial hemp as another cash crop in Iowa's agricultural economy, but opponents said the proposal is too risky due to ties with hemp's hallucinogenic cousin -- marijuana," dutifully explained the paper. "Legalize," was used again and again: "The Senate Agriculture Committee passed the bill on a voice vote Tuesday to *legalize* the plant, which can be used for building materials, twine, textiles and fiber, said Sen. Mark Ziemann, R-Postville"<sup>25</sup> While "legalize" was repeatedly stressed, the jailing of hemp farmers under current law was of course not mentioned. Neither were mentioned the US Government's hemp-growing programs of the 1940s.

When attempting to persuade people that government need retain powers to jail citizens for growing forbidden plants, it is perhaps best for the propagandist to keep arguments simple and emotional. If hemp is "legalized", says the drug warrior, then total access to drugs by our children would surely be the ruinous result.

### **Egregious cases of Using "Legalize" to Describe Medical Marijuana**

The people in some US states have demanded that seriously ill patients simply *not be arrested* for possessing small amounts of marijuana. Staunch prohibitionists will have none of that, though. Any hint that terminally ill cancer patients might be allowed to have cannabis to ease their vomiting and suffering is converted into full-scale "legalization" of "marijuana" for children.

"Legalize marijuana? Simply don't do it," urged one Arkansas writer. "House Bill 1303 would allow the legalization of marijuana. It falls under the guise of medicinal usage,"<sup>26</sup> was the confident assertion. Not imprisoning some small section of the population of cancer patients and other physically ill folk is painted as total access.

## Drug War Propaganda

"This is medically and scientifically incoherent," the writer continued, forgetting that patients are now jailed for using cannabis. Medical marijuana, it was asserted, is a plot. Wealthy malefactors were bankrolling the insidious conspiracy:

"Leaders of the legalization movement have been funded from the pockets of three individuals. One billionaire and two multimillionaires have already spent millions of dollars across the nation to place initiatives and bills on the ballot of all states. They disguise their concerns as compassion for suffering patients when in fact the concerns of these individuals lie in their desire to legalize any form of illegal drug so that *the door may become open to legalization of all drugs*."<sup>27</sup>

You see (the line goes), there are these billionaires. These wicked billionaires, seeking open the floodgates to total access to "all drugs." Repeatedly stressing "legalization", the prohibitionist links medical marijuana to "legalization of all drugs," i.e., total access. The issue of incarcerating patients for use of a plant, an age-old traditional remedy, is swept aside; jail is forgotten or euphemized.

"Bipartisan Bloc Backs Legalizing Medicinal Marijuana," announced the headline of a Maryland paper, likewise linking the medicinal use of marijuana with the vilified "legalization."

The approach of local prohibitionists was explained. "But activists such as Joyce Nalepka believe medicinal marijuana use would *open the door to full legalization*," contending "that groups supporting medicinal use do so partly as a way to decriminalize marijuana."<sup>28</sup> (Note the similar wording: "[T]he door may become open to legalization of all drugs, from the Arkansas writer earlier, compared with "*open the door to full legalization*," from the Maryland activist here. This is an expression of a fallacy, the classic logical fallacy known as a *slippery slope argument*.)

A Vermont paper played it the same way. "Some Lawmakers Want *Pot Legalized* For Sick," banged the headline, stressing associations with the wicked "legalization" of marijuana. The threats to our children (another prohibitionist theme), were also emphasized. Stated one government police official of a proposed bill: "some young people can start experimenting with marijuana and then move to more dangerous

## Drug War Propaganda

drugs. He said *medicinal marijuana* bills are an attempt to have *marijuana use legalized*."<sup>29</sup> In other words, any desire to not imprison sick people who use cannabis would lead to total access, therefore (says the prohibitionist propagandist), total prohibition is all the more indicated. (The jailing of patients for taking cannabis under the law now, was left unreported.)

In a striking example of this propaganda theme, a New Hampshire paper similarly tried to smash together the association between medical marijuana and the dread "legalization" of marijuana. The headline itself, screaming: "PANEL HEARS BILL TO *LEGALIZE MARIJUANA*," began the process. Total access would be the dire result, shouted prohibitionists, if total prohibition were not maintained. Words of police were dutifully relayed; mention of jail or prison was studiously avoided.

CONCORD -- Proponents of legislation to *legalize marijuana* for medicinal purposes are seeking to convince the House Health, Human Service and Elderly Affairs Committee that marijuana can be safely prescribed for alleviating pain or controlling painful side effects of other currently legal drugs such as interferon. . . .

In the recent past, the Legislature has repeatedly defeated attempts to *legalize the drug* based on opposition from the New Hampshire Medical Society and law enforcement officials. . . .

The medical society continues to oppose *legalization* because it believes that *marijuana is a dangerous drug*, and that treatment of vomiting associated with chemotherapy can be controlled by using Marinol, a legalized derivative of marijuana. Proponents argue that terminal cancer patients should be allowed to use marijuana to control severe pain. . . .

Peter H. Giese, representing the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police, said the bill is another attempt to *legalize marijuana* in general and could lead to severe enforcement problems in the illicit production and sale of the drug."<sup>30</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

Humming in harmony, official, expert, and authority assure readers: unless cannabis is totally prohibited (meaning, medical users are arrested and jailed for using it), then total access will be the odious outcome.

Another New Hampshire paper added details. The headline likewise stressed the idea of (total) legalization: "House Bill Would Legalize Medical Use of Marijuana."

Words of police were again transmitted. "Enfield Police Chief Peter Giese, representing the New Hampshire Police Chiefs Association said the group opposes the bill. He insisted the agenda was more about *drug legalization* than alleviating suffering."

"I am here because we believe this is nothing more than an entree into the *legalization debate*," stated the police propagandist. Apparently, debate itself must never be allowed. "This is a bill to *legalize marijuana* in the state of New Hampshire," the police official asserted. Going on to link medical marijuana with access to hated heroin, the police spokesman rhetorically asked, "If this debate were about relieving suffering, why not just make heroin available on demand?"<sup>31</sup>

In the Washington D.C. politicians repeatedly blocked petitions and initiatives to stop arresting medical marijuana patients, even effectively nullifying the result of a majority vote on the matter -- when the vote didn't go the prohibitionists' way. Expressing contempt for voters, Congress passed a bill that attempted to prevent people from even *voting* on the matter in the future. The issue in allowing the taxpayers of the city to even vote on the matter, crowed one politician, "was about whether federal taxpayer dollars should be used to support the drug legalization effort in the nation's capital." Noble politicians, he stated (by prohibiting citizens from voting), were merely "protect[ing] citizens from dangerous, mind-altering narcotics."<sup>32</sup>

If patients are not jailed for using medical marijuana, say prohibitionists, then total legalization of marijuana, total access to all hated drugs would happen.

### Classic Slippery Slopes



## Drug War Propaganda

### Medical Cannabis to Total Legalization of Marijuana

Many prohibitionists claim that not arresting the sick and dying people who use cannabis would lead to total "legalization" of marijuana. The slippery slope to total access to marijuana, the drug warrior says, is reason to continue the jailing. (Well, jail is not explicitly mentioned.) To heighten fears, total access by "the children" may be emotionally stressed.

"All these attempts to *legalize marijuana* for medicinal purposes are part of an indirect means of achieving *total legalization of the drug*," huffed one official. The bureaucrat pointed to "studies stating that regular use of marijuana damages the human brain, immune system, reproductive organs and lungs."

Ever with an eye to the propaganda value of all events, the official fretted that "the message being spread concerning the *so-called medical use of marijuana* is very effective advertising to convince kids that marijuana is not harmful. This advertising is many times more effective than those 'Joe Camel' ads by the tobacco companies, which lured children to smoke tobacco," asserted the government official.<sup>33</sup>

A Texas paper warned of the horrific consequences should people no longer be in peril of arrest and incarceration for using marijuana medically. This would be a "stepping stone" to total legalization of marijuana the paper reported, quoting politicians.<sup>34</sup>

"A bill that would strengthen defense against prosecution," the paper said (euphemizing away the issue of incarceration), "for those using marijuana with a doctor's approval met with resistance Tuesday from some legislators who fear it could lead to *completely legalizing the drug*." To avoid sliding down the slippery slope to total access of the sinful marijuana, say righteous legislators, total prohibition must be strengthened.

Politicians "on the jurisprudence committee expressed concern over the bill's implied method of self-medication -- smoking -- as well as whether the bill would function as a *stepping stone* to eventually *legalizing marijuana in full*." The good lawmakers of the land are only holding the line in maintaining total prohibition. All or none. Otherwise

## Drug War Propaganda

marijuana sin shall fill the countryside. "All I think it'll do is just proliferate the use of the drug just like it would any other drug," the paper quoted one politician as saying. "Anyone can raise that defense, it's an affirmative defense, if they can get a doctor,"<sup>35</sup> cried the politician. (The paper did not ask the politician how that situation reflected on the medical licensure laws of Texas.)

Another Texas politician also spoke out against the bill.<sup>36</sup> While remaining mum on the issue of jailing ailing folk who find relief in marijuana, the politician revealed "he thinks the bill is backed by, 'what appears to me as a movement to *legalize marijuana*.'" (That the DEA was against allowing sick people to use cannabis was considered ample reason to continue to arrest such folk: "the federal Drug Enforcement Administration does not think there is a valid medicinal benefit from smoking marijuana."<sup>37</sup>)

For example, (without mentioning jail or incarceration) one medical association stated that because of the larger issue of "marijuana legalization," sick and dying people who use cannabis must be increasingly criminalized, jailed and punished: "Those opposing the council's proposal in support of medical pot argued that marijuana has a potential for abuse, and that an AMA endorsement of medicinal cannabis could be seen as support for broader marijuana legalization."<sup>38</sup> Unless complete prohibition is maintained and increased, say prohibitionists, "broader marijuana legalization" (that is, fear of *total access*) would happen.

One US Congressman, representative Bob Barr, told a TV audience that *medical marijuana* did not exist: there was only "marijuana."<sup>39</sup>

"First of all, there's no such thing as 'medical marijuana,' there is marijuana," declared Barr. In other words, there can only be total prohibition because there is only "marijuana."

Otherwise, says Barr, the "legalizers" would usher in total legalization. But Barr knows better: "They have put the word 'medical' in front of it to make it appear benign -- to put a kind and gentle face on it." It is the hated "drug legalizers I'm speaking of here," revealed Barr.

Barr elaborated on his premise of total prohibition; not jailing sick and

## Drug War Propaganda

dying people for using cannabis was described as the dreaded "legalize marijuana" (that is, *total access*): "I don't favor it in [any] *way, shape or form*, and I don't think that the Supreme Court will allow an individual state, even if it wants to *legalize marijuana*, to say that means the federal government [cannot] continue to enforce federal drug laws." Again the prohibitionist theme is repeated: total access ("legalize marijuana"), or total prohibition (in every "way, shape, and form").

Apparently unaware that *slippery slope* arguments are classic fallacies, Barr built on the theme of total access or total prohibition: "I do think they should not be allowed to use it -- because you get yourself on a very *slippery slope* here."<sup>40</sup>

### Cannabis to All Drugs

Not locking up cancer patients who use cannabis, say prohibitionists, would certainly lead to total access of marijuana. But the prohibitionist often goes even farther than that. Refusal to incarcerate adults who use marijuana, says the propagandist, would lead to total legalization of all drugs!

"[E]xperts in drug policy," one paper revealed, "believe this so-called 'weedotherapy' campaign is a thinly veiled, well-financed effort to eventually *legalize pot and other now-illegal drugs* for purely recreational use."<sup>41</sup>

A government drug agent agreed. "[T]he real issues behind the effort to legalize marijuana for so-called medical purposes" were sinister indeed. "State-by-state referendum campaigns, staged by drug advocates and bankrolled by billionaires," were an insidious creep to total access: "In fact, the campaign is simply a tactical maneuver in an overall strategy *to legalize all drugs*."<sup>42</sup>

Other government narcotics agents, with income depending on continued prohibition, concur. "Even legalizing marijuana to smoke for medicinal purposes would worsen drug problems in the state," said the narcotics police official. If total prohibition is not maintained, then surely total access will result: "If marijuana is recommended as so-called medicine, how will you refuse to allow employees *to use their drugs in the workplace*?"<sup>43</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

Police in Canada offer up the same reasons. People must always be arrested and jailed for using marijuana, say police, otherwise "illicit drugs are legalized." In other words: total access will exist. "Keep Marijuana Illegal, Police Group Says . . . the police association, representing some 30,000 officers across the country, warned legalization would have disastrous social consequences."<sup>44</sup>

"When *illicit drugs are legalized*," the police spokesman confidently asserted, "drug usage increases, the demand for chemical drugs increases and crime increases. . . . The costs of drug liberalization will be astronomical."<sup>45</sup> The officer did not offer any specific examples.

A Maryland writer agreed. A proposed medical marijuana bill in that state drew the ire of prohibitionists who saw a looming legalization of crack for children, should sick and dying people not be jailed for using the cannabis plant. "This bill, if it passes, will only open up a can of worms on marijuana as an *overall legalization*. Shall we legalize other illegal substances to 'help' the sick? If they find crack cocaine beneficial to 'treating' an illness should we legalize that as well? Maybe little Johnny can go across the street with his doctor's note and go get 'stoned.'"<sup>46</sup>

### Spring 2001 Supreme Court Saga

In the spring of 2001, a lower court ruling allowing the implementation of California's Proposition 215 came up for appeal to the US Supreme Court. Proposition 215 allowed seriously ill patients to use marijuana, provided they had permission from a doctor to do so.

Not jailing such ill people who use cannabis was repeatedly called "legalization." In fact, the unpleasant idea of jail was avoided altogether.

Instead, in lodging the appeal, the US Government emphasized the theme of total access.

"In court papers, the government has called the 9th circuit's ruling 'unprecedented' and a threat to Congress' power to combat illegal drug trafficking. . . . the U.S. solicitor general argued that the ruling would allow clubs like Oakland's to 'function as *an unregulated and*

## Drug War Propaganda

*unsupervised marijuana pharmacy.*"<sup>47</sup>

To demonstrate opposition to medical marijuana, concerned parents were mobilized to show that the good people opposed evil counterculture attempts at legalizing all drugs for kids.

One protester, reported a California paper, "stood outside the Supreme Court holding a banner that read 'Protect Our Children. Stop Pot,' and said he opposes the broader message that medicinal marijuana advocates are sending children. '*People who want marijuana to be legalized for terminally ill people want it to be legal for everyone,*' he charged. 'Drugs are a huge problem in America, but I don't think legalization is the answer.'"<sup>48</sup>

One after another, editorials mocked the idea that marijuana could have medical value. It was a "sly crawl"<sup>49</sup> to total access of the hated weed, said writers. The idea of imprisoning or jailing people who used marijuana, of arresting them and stealing their children, property and freedoms was, of course, not mentioned. Instead, the dread "legalization" word was repeated.

"So what should the justices do?" rhetorically asked one editorial. The idea that the sick should not be arrested for using an ancient and traditional herbal remedy was apparently the oddest thing the writer had ever heard. Rather, it was more proper that government "should decide whether 'medical necessity' cases violate federal drug laws -- period." Why? "[B]ecause a less comprehensive ruling might allow 'cannabis clubs' to distribute marijuana for medical use, which in turn might well open the door to unrestricted use for anyone who claims to be 'sick,'" scoffed the editor.

Again, fears of total access were played upon: "There is no doubt that some supporters of prescription pot see it as an opportunity to smoke the illegal substance without fear of criminal prosecution."<sup>50</sup>

Urging the courts to rule against medical marijuana, a Boston editorialist (Don Feder) savaged the idea that patients should be allowed to use cannabis, as "backdoor legalization." The ostensibly hostile motives of "most supporters of medical marijuana," were denounced. Why, huffed experts, it was plain unscientific! Mention of

## Drug War Propaganda

jail was not made.

"Medical marijuana is the compassion cover for legalization. . . . An article in Proceedings of the Association of American Physicians observes, 'Most supporters of medical marijuana are hostile to the use of purified chemicals from marijuana, insisting that only smoked marijuana leaves be used as 'medicine,' revealing clearly that their motivation is not scientific medicine but backdoor legalization.'"<sup>51</sup>

The idea that government should not jail cancer patients and other ill people using cannabis was ridiculed by supreme court justices as it had been in much of the press. Jail was not mentioned, as is customary.

Describing the legal firm who had taken the case pro-bono as "Marijuana Proponents," who were to "Face Justices," as one New Jersey paper's headline put it, the spectacle was described.

One "Justice," a joke at the ready, demanded a "list [of] medical emergencies that could require marijuana treatment." When a patients' attorney complied, listing, "Death, starvation, blindness," he was cut off by the Justice, to hear the Justice's punch line. "'Stomachache?' Scalia interrupted with an edge of sarcasm."<sup>52</sup>

It was summarily decided by the justices that because of the message total legalization of the hated marijuana might send to children, patients who persisted in using marijuana medicinally were therefore depraved outlaws who rightfully deserved to be hunted down and jailed. "[M]arijuana has no medical benefits," wrote the Justices, benevolently assuming the roles of doctor and parent to the nation.<sup>53</sup>

The prohibitionist press hailed the supreme court ruling early and often as the death-knell for the "legalization" of marijuana and as the final nail in the coffin of medical marijuana patients and advocates. Efforts to peacefully change existing laws -- efforts to conscientiously work within the system -- were painted as sinister attempts to make all drugs available and "legalized" for children. The issue of jailing sick and dying people whose sole crime consisted of using cannabis, indeed the whole issue of *jail* altogether, was carefully avoided by prohibitionists.

"Pot Deservedly KO'd," crowed a Georgia paper. It was all a plot to

## Drug War Propaganda

legalize pot, declared the paper. "The U.S. Supreme Court was right to rule this week that dispensing marijuana to sick people violates federal drug laws. Indeed, the medical marijuana movement is nothing more than *a thinly veiled effort to legalize pot smoking*."<sup>54</sup>

"'Medical Marijuana' Fans Lose A Round," chimed a Florida editorial. "The court didn't deal with the idea that some supporters of prescription pot see it as an opportunity to smoke the illegal substance without fear of criminal prosecution," pretended the paper.<sup>55</sup>

This attempt to totally legalize drugs, proclaimed prohibitionist papers, was thankfully thwarted. Repeating the pattern we have come to expect, the press scrupulously avoided minor details concerning the jailing of medical marijuana patients. Instead, the dreaded "legalization" was stressed.

Pliant prohibitionist editorials echoed government ridicule of the idea that adults be allowed to use a traditional plant remedy as medicine, without fear of being jailed for doing so.

One paper, elaborating on the reasoning of a prohibitionist politician, explained that "the medical marijuana movement is a scam designed to open the door to widespread distribution of the drug."<sup>56</sup> In other words, either sick and dying people who use marijuana are jailed, (total prohibition), or the "widespread distribution" of total access is where we shall surely end up.

"The true aim of those who support the so-called medical marijuana movement," revealed the politician, "has been and continues to be, *the legalization of all drugs* . . . Terminally ill patients have been used as pawns in a cynical political game designed to weaken society's opposition to *drug abuse*." Not arresting and jailing people who use marijuana as medicine, say the good rulers of the land, shall lead to the total access legalization and subsequent downfall of society.

"Fortunately, the Supreme Court did the right thing and stopped this dangerous movement dead in its tracks . . . though the drug legalization movement will no doubt continue its efforts."<sup>57</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

*"Also failing was a medical-marijuana bill and reductions in criminal penalties for minor drug possession. . . . [L]egislators . . . mischaracterized the bills as drug legalization."<sup>58</sup>*

### Other [Medical] Marijuana

The supreme court reflects the attitudes of many. Politician and paper around the world repeat the chant: medical marijuana is legalization and is therefore total access. Total prohibition of the noxious weed can be the only response to this wickedness, say prohibitionists.

"Medical Marijuana Bill Stays In Committee," reported one paper. The opinions of police (who stood to lose authority and power from the new law), were given great play. Fears of unrestricted access were emphasized. The "director of the state Division of Investigation, said the bill would encourage more drug abuse. He said the bill is unenforceable and does not identify or control 'who grows, who transports and who sells,'" complained the drug agent. "Moreover, licensed providers in states where the medical use of marijuana is legal must purchase the drug on the black market. 'Then it goes from illegal to legal,' he said."<sup>59</sup>

In South Dakota, the story was the same. Doctors spoke out against "legalizing," jail was not spoken of. "Dean Krogman, South Dakota Medical Association, said physicians writing prescriptions for marijuana would subject themselves to legal and licensing problems at the federal level. He said the state medical association would not support a law *legalizing the use of a drug* with limited medical research to back its benefits."<sup>60</sup>

"We've heard their side," stated one California sheriff. "Their side is that they want all drugs legalized."<sup>61</sup> Arkansas politicians agreed: not jailing cannabis-using patients would trouble police too much, it "would make it harder for law enforcement to prosecute illegal marijuana trafficking and could harm those who want to use the drug to treat their ailments."<sup>62</sup> Utah prohibitionists concurred: "it's an effort to legalize marijuana."<sup>63</sup>

The same story is repeated in one State Legislature after another. The



## Drug War Propaganda

prohibitionist theme is played out exactly as described by researcher William White in 1979: "As bills are introduced to lower criminal penalties for various illicit drugs, one can anticipate any number of legislators standing to attack reduced penalties as an invitation for use and a first step toward legalization of drug X."<sup>64</sup> Unless forbidden drugs are totally prohibited, then (says the rhetoric of prohibition), the mayhem and crisis of unrestrained access by children would be the sorry result.

A Michigan state senator said "he is opposed to legalizing any use of marijuana in Michigan," because "It is like the camel under the tent, it is being used to promote general recreational use."<sup>65</sup>

"These people want you to believe this is about medical marijuana," quivered one prosecutor, job on the line due to a recall effort. "It is not. This process is about the rule of law and the entire legal process."<sup>66</sup> Elsewhere too, police see their roles as medical doctor and parent to citizens, to spare the unwary total access to the dread marijuana. "We don't want a process," stated police, "that can be used as a shield by illegal marijuana growers." Patients, police complained bitterly, might take cannabis for "any medical condition. . . . That could be male pattern baldness."<sup>67</sup>

Prohibitionist groups agree also: to simply research medical marijuana would be opening the floodgates to the total access of legalization. As one paper explained the drug warrior's plans: "legal marijuana use would send the wrong message to children and that it is associated with several health risks, including cancer." To even so much as study the issue of whether or not patients should be arrested and jailed for using cannabis was a "strategy for promoting the legalization of marijuana."<sup>68</sup> Allowing medical marijuana might be a wicked trick to total legalization: "Jeanette McDougal, co-chairwoman of Drug Watch Minnesota . . . called medicinal marijuana proposals a foot in the door for legalizing marijuana for recreational use."<sup>69</sup>

In Nevada, the legislature mulled "reducing the penalty for possession or one ounce or less of marijuana from a felony to a misdemeanor." True to the theme, politicians attacked the idea as an invitation for use: "I'm concerned that we're sending the wrong message . . . We're telling

## Drug War Propaganda

them it's OK to have a little bit because it's not a big deal."<sup>70</sup> An Australian proposed "two-year trial to gauge the efficacy of cannabis and looked at the 'compassionate use' of the drug for about 50 people a year who did not respond to conventional drugs" drew howls of protest from politicians: it was "next drug liberalisation adventure," they sneered.<sup>71</sup> (Mention was not made of present situation where medical users risked arrest.)

*"It doesn't matter whether one drug is less dangerous than another. The clear message that we have to send out to young people is that drugs are bad for you and you shouldn't take them."*<sup>72</sup>

### Non-Medical Marijuana

If the idea of no longer jailing medical patients who find relief in cannabis irks prohibitionists, the thought of doing anything but making the law more harsh for other users of marijuana is a foreign and alien concept. It is *sending out the wrong message*, say politicians; it is "an invitation to use," prohibitionists shout.<sup>73</sup>

"Reduce Penalty For Pot?" rhetorically asked one editorial headline. "Time To Just Say No," it was decided. Marijuana must be totally prohibited; punishments may only be increased, never reduced. Police, fattened by forfeiture laws that allow police to "seize" the property of marijuana smokers, agreed. Anything that lessens the punishing power of police is bad: "police say that giving them discretion to effectively reduce the penalty for possession of marijuana is a crime-fighting tool." The local prosecutor was of the same mind: "adoption of such an ordinance might allow someone's first drug offense to go undetected on subsequent offenses."<sup>74</sup> Total prohibition is all the more indicated in all situations, say officials and authorities.

"Legalise cannabis for retail over the shop counter and thereby massively increase availability and consumption in the population, particularly, most likely, among young people?" huffed one incredulous writer. The "likely huge increase in cannabis consumption," (that is, fears of total access, by children), indicated need for continued

## Drug War Propaganda

prohibition.<sup>75</sup>

The prohibitionist may want to use a "poll" to appear to buttress arguments for continued prohibition. Mainstream media continually taints and smears the term "legalize" or "legalization" with counterculture associations. (See the "counterculture" and "legalizer" sections in chapter one.) This serves to divert the hearer's attention from unpleasant details of police, arrest, seizure, jail and rape. Instead, it acts to focus the hearer's attention on the hated group of legalizers. Are the good and righteous people like those bad legalizers, asks the propagandist? "Nay!" say the good people.

"Fifty-seven per cent of readers sampled in The Bulletin survey were against the legalisation of marijuana. . . . people wanted tougher action taken against drug dealers and users. . . . Thirty nine per cent of those sampled also considered that mandatory sentencing would be a good way to help control drug use."<sup>76</sup> The survey and article, were careful not to mention jail or prison explicitly.

It is a moral issue, say police: "The police association, in a written brief to be presented to the committee, decries the 'weakening perceptions of risk of harm in drug use and the weakening moral disapproval of drug use.'"<sup>77</sup> A group in California made the same plea: adults must be incarcerated for using cannabis, because using cannabis is immoral: "the Committee on Moral Concerns opposed the measure [to lessen marijuana use penalties], . . . the bill is 'another message marijuana is almost OK.'"<sup>78</sup>

### Other 'Drugs': Total Access or Total Prohibition

Retain Drug Use Punishments or Total Legalization, For the Children

Any attempt at lessening drug use penalties, or reducing the punishment of jail for drug users is painted as "legalizing all drugs," or the first step on the slippery slope.

To one prohibitionist, a voter referendum to treat and not jail first time drug offenders was "undoubtedly the most dangerous and misleading initiative to come before the voters of California in many years. This proposition takes the first giant step toward *legalizing all drugs* . . .

## Drug War Propaganda

drug users would have little incentive to reform. If passed it will decriminalize heroin, crank, cocaine and other illegal drugs. These are the drugs behind most cases of *child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assaults* and other violent and theft-related crimes."<sup>79</sup>

"Legalizing drugs for adults," agreed another prohibitionist writer, "would simply move the illicit market to the purview of younger and younger children, and drug trafficking and dealing would continue to flourish."<sup>80</sup>

"Legalization or even decriminalizing drugs," asserted a prosecutor, whose income depended on prosecuting and incarcerating adult drug users, "will not stop them from committing the crimes which provide them with the funds to pay for their habit. That's just one small piece of the issue of drugs and our youth."<sup>81</sup> Any lessening of penalties is painted as "legalization"; total access of "drugs" for children is insinuated.

The BBC emphasizes a similar dilemma: "Doctors Oppose More Heroin Prescription," the headline suggested. (Insinuating that heroin addiction is presently treated in the UK with heroin, and also insinuating that all doctors agreed on the matter.) The "Royal College of General Practitioners," reported the BBC, did not wish to send a message to heroin users that they could take heroin by prescription (thus taking the user off the street, as is done in Switzerland and elsewhere, as was done in the UK before 1974), because the good doctors wanted to force "addicts stop taking drugs altogether."<sup>82</sup>

### Message Sending

In the mythology and sloganeering of prohibition, we have seen how a stark contrast is drawn: either agree with prohibitionists' latest punishments for drug use or total legalization would be the sorry result. Often, the propagandist will claim that the harsh measures (or not "legalizing") are needed to "send a message."

Presenting policy options as total access or total prohibition, (as well as turning democracy on its head), one US politician dictated, "Acceptance of drug use is simply not an option . . . the only humane and compassionate response to drug use is a moral refusal to accept it.

## Drug War Propaganda

We emphatically disagree with those who favor drug legalization," the politician declared. Why? Because, the politicians assure us that "legalizing drugs would completely undermine *the message* that drug use is wrong."<sup>83</sup>

"If I'm entrusted with the Presidency," bellowed one politician, (hoping that his dictates might be mistaken for moral precepts), "I'll *send a strong message* to every American child: Drugs are wrong," he thundered. "I'll lead a national *crusade* to dry up drug demand, hold up drugs at the border and break up the drug rings that are spreading poison on our streets."<sup>84</sup> Apparently prohibitionist concerns for "sending a message" overrule small matters like the Bill of Rights, history, tradition and common sense. Sending "a message" is all-important, therefore total prohibition (say prohibitionists) is the only answer.

One state governor questioned the harshness and severity of drug laws in his state. Party-line prohibitionists howled. Questioning punishments was predictably represented as total legalization, even the promotion of drugs. "I hate for him to continue championing drugs like this," said one politician. "I also hate to see him take his message to a trashy magazine like Playboy."<sup>85</sup>

Posturing prohibitionist politicians know the formula well: simply slinging accusations of sending a wrong "message" will be proof enough for most people. Needle-exchange programs for example, "are simply wrong because they *send a mixed message* to our youth about the dangers of drugs," declared another politician. Such would be tantamount to total legalization it is insinuated: "Neither the county nor I will ever aid and abet drug usage in this or any other way."<sup>86</sup> Similarly, a prohibitionist editor announced that the "drug czar's most important job is to promote a clear *message*: Drug use is dangerous."<sup>87</sup> In other words, the job of the "drug czar" is the generation of drug prohibition propaganda.

### Summary

We have examined some of the ways that expert and authority portray drug policy possibilities in extremes: the stark terms of a frightful total access, versus a comforting total prohibition. Prohibitionists present

## Drug War Propaganda

drug use as a moral and religious struggle for good and evil. Since all use of drugs declared illegal by politicians is abuse, that is to say bad use: that "badness" is framed in moral and religious terms by the propagandist. "All use is sinful and must be stopped."<sup>88</sup>

Any suggestion that penalties even for marijuana be lessened is painted by the prohibitionist as total legalization. We have seen how simply *not arresting* sick and dying people who use marijuana is described as total legalization of all drugs. Argument by slippery-slope is a favorite technique of the prohibitionist propagandist; any reduction in penalties is pictured as the first step to legalizing all drugs for use by children.

Indeed, the propagandist is fond of attempting to turn the tables on those who dare question total prohibition. As we will see in the next chapter, prohibitionists simply attack those who disagree with prohibition, rather than by responding to criticism. Questions of, or disagreement with, prohibition by drug policy experts may be instead framed as a depraved desire for total access. Those who question drug policy, they merely wish "to be allowed to use whatever drugs they want, whenever they want," claim prohibitionists.<sup>89</sup>

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## Drug War Propaganda

### Target: Dissent

*[T]he battle we'll be facing with Hastert and the drug warriors is that we are traitors to America because we're soft on drugs. -- Mike Gray*

Instead of responding to the questions and points made by reformers, it is easier for the propagandist to simply attack those who ask inconvenient questions. The prohibitionist may sometimes prefer this to complex arguments which may be lost on many in any event. Why spend much time, when a simple ad hominem attack will do?

A reading of any number of works which trace the development and evolution of our narcotics policy, all demonstrate the personal hazards in challenging those policies. To attack or challenge existing policies has opened one up for charges ranging from a lack of patriotism to charges that the critic is himself part of the international drug conspiracy. To most persons, confronting the issues surrounding the inadequacies of existing drug policy is simply not worth the challenges to their own personal integrity.<sup>1</sup>

Prohibitionists, disturbed at the thought of anyone daring to question the ratcheting up of punishments, seem to believe the best defense is a good *offense*. Propagandists continually smear and label those who question prohibition.

To do this, prohibitionists typically will try to link dissenters with hated subgroups, or just accuse them of lying. The propagandist may suggest dissenters be silenced, or accuse dissenters of causing children or others to take drugs. Dissenters are often simply accused of taking drugs, or accused of pushing drugs. Prohibitionists suggest that those who question current drug laws are traitors who should be silenced, and

## **Drug War Propaganda**

jailed. Sometimes drug-law dissenters are executed.

### **Dissent and Hated Groups**

Those who question drug laws, say prohibitionists, must be ignored. This is because they are like those other people; those people we hate. Therefore, says the propagandist, 'consider the source.'

Prohibitionists are indignant that anyone would dare question them. How could anyone question our drug laws: are not all such questions asked by child poison peddlers? The righteous anger of society must be directed against "those who continue to claim that there is nothing wrong with peddling poisons to children," one editor explained. For "drug dealers and their supporters," question jailing drug users. Yet (continued the editor), "the sad reality is that those claims are nothing more than a self serving excuse for poisoners who wish to distribute dangerous chemicals to anyone they please."<sup>2</sup> In other words, those who question drug laws are poisoners of children.

"I have learned that it's not just the dealers we have to be wary of, it's those who promote drug use as a personal right, the drug-policy reformers," proclaimed one prohibitionist. The activist went on to link drug policy reformers with hated drug dealers and despised tobacco companies. "Drug-policy reformers and drug dealers, just like the tobacco industry, have always targeted adolescents and young adults for recruits."<sup>3</sup>

Drug law reformers, said the prohibitionist, they are like rapists and murderers; to suggest traditional freedoms be restored to adults, was "as ludicrous as demanding that child abuse and rape should be legalized." <sup>4</sup>

Those (no matter how many) who disagree with jail for people who take drugs, they are a "fringe" group. They should be ignored, say prohibitionists. This is because critics of current drug policy range "from liberals who plain don't like law enforcement to libertarians who don't think drugs should be illegal." Those disagreeing with drug policy aren't patriotic, good Americans: "Coming from these quarters, does anyone believe America will really buy their argument that it's Mr. Walters who's on the fringe?"<sup>5</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

Following the pattern, a UK government drugs "tsar" decried those disagreeing with government drugs policy. "Tsar Takes Aim At Legalisation Lobby," announced a paper in the UK. Those who question current drug laws are blamed for "Encouraging A Relaxation Of Laws." Besides, announced one British politician, it is only "a vociferous minority," who media is "happy to develop."<sup>6</sup> Feeling pressure, "the Government's anti-drugs co-ordinator" lashed out at those who dare express disagreement with government drugs policy. They are "nothing more than a tiny but noisy pressure group."<sup>7</sup> The coordinator did not explain why he felt a need to respond to such an insignificant organization. One paper more accurately described the situation: "Drug Czar Attacks Cannabis Debate." In other words, the dissent (and dissenter) is attacked, rather than bother to justify the current policy. Questioning the law has "undermined the 'clarity' of the official stance on cannabis."<sup>8</sup>

Sometimes the prohibitionist may paint dissenters as a despised yet strong adversary, bent on the merciless destruction of the helpless. They are the "ever more powerful drug legalizers," who are "oblivious to the human devastation surrounding drugs."<sup>9</sup> "The agenda of the Lindesmith Center-Drug Policy Foundation," huffed one editor, "and its many client organizations in promoting these initiatives has been a matter of concern." Those who question drug policy have malicious intent: "Until recently, it could be argued that their intent was benign," the editor added.<sup>10</sup>

The "advocates of drug-legalization have employed a number of political and legal strategies to legitimize smoking marijuana," wailed another prohibitionist.<sup>11</sup> The "favorite accusation of its pro-Drug War opponents," is "that drug-law reformers are closet legalizers," noted one student of drug policy.<sup>12</sup> Declared one government anti-drug official: "All they want to do is legalize drugs."<sup>13</sup> Time and time again, rather than deal with the substance of reformers' points, prohibitionists simply the attack the supposed motives of reformers, instead.

### Hated Dissenters Pushing Drugs

The propagandist is wont to describe the cessation of *prison* as a punishment for pot-smokers as the bogeyman of "legalization." As we

## Drug War Propaganda

have seen, the idea is not that reformers are questioning the use of incarceration. Instead, the wicked reformers are accused of being drug users, wanting to foist a strange and foreign "legalization" upon an unwilling people. The idea the prohibitionist wants to sell, is the idea that drug reformers wish to *push* drugs.

For example, a New Zealand paper revealed, "Green MP and cannabis user Nandor Tanczos . . . is mainly known to the public for two reasons, his dreadlocks and his campaign for liberalising the cannabis legislation. . . . [He] is building a case for decriminalising his drug of choice."<sup>14</sup>

"You do a disservice to your readers by taking up the cause of pot smoking social engineers who call for the legalization of marijuana," another writer screamed. "Little or no research has been done of the effects of smoking pot," the writer complained. "About all we have are the testimonials of pot smokers which in my view would not carry much weight because this group has a vested interest in seeing it legitimized."<sup>15</sup> Oddly, the writer left off discussion of the vested interests of police, prosecutor, jailer and other branches of government.

One writer insinuated that dissent with government programs was tantamount to targeting youth: "There is opposition to DARE from groups like the Lindesmith Centre and the Marijuana Party, who support the legalization of marijuana. The unfortunate part is these groups choose to target youth programs to make their point."<sup>16</sup>

The hated "advocates of legalization," merely want "pot and other drugs for recreational use," another editor fumed. It was only "to promote recreational drug use," the editor asserted. (No mention was made of jail.) "Uncontrolled private distribution of the illegal form of the drug is not good medicine, good science or good law."<sup>17</sup>

### Wealthy Dissenters vs. Poor Government

"Supporters of the drug war, like myself, did not think any such destructive movement would become accepted among people who consider themselves informed and intelligent, including journalists," hissed one journalist. With "propaganda funds from a few truly rich Americans," the dissenters question drug warriors. This is not to be

## Drug War Propaganda

tolerated! Unlike good Americans who are silent, the "legalizers" have "hatred for the drug war, out of whatever cradle trauma."<sup>18</sup> That they are citizens, questioning unworkable and expensive policy failures, is not considered.

"The advocates of drug legalization ignore the human costs of overdose deaths, drug- addicted newborns, broken homes and broken hearts," explained other prohibitionists.<sup>19</sup> Reformers are supposedly "financed by the money of George Soros and others," another elaborated.<sup>20</sup>

We must never listen to the legalizers, because "their ultimate reason for promoting the scam of legalizing 'medicinal' marijuana is driven by their long-term goal of legalizing all drugs for recreational purposes," revealed another writer. This wicked "cartel of legalizers bankrolled by George Soros and friends is (one state at a time) circumventing federal laws," the writer complained.<sup>21</sup>

People who question drug policy are "seeking to dismantle drug laws," and want to "turn the drug death trade over to government or big business," the director of Michigan's drug control policy protested.<sup>22</sup> A New York editorial concurred: the "well-funded drug legalization movement" is to be vilified for questioning existing drug laws.<sup>23</sup> "Having had eight years to build their case unopposed, financed by the money of George Soros and others," the drug reformers, wrote another editor, "never speak of the human and economic costs that legalized drugs would inflict on all of us."<sup>24</sup>

Prohibitionists continually rail against George Soros and others who dare donate money to drug reform organizations. The wealth of such benefactors is given great play. Prohibitionists nurture the perception that the untold billions these men are said to control are pitted against a hopelessly weak and underfunded government. (The far greater amounts that the US government spends to vilify drug users in the media and elsewhere are not mentioned.) This helps present an image of government as an embattled underdog, outgunned by the "billions" of a devious enemy.

"Super-Wealthy Threesome Fund Growing War On The War On Drug War," another headline shouted. Again, the total worth of some notable dissenters is given great play; left unmentioned are the amounts

## Drug War Propaganda

government spends to filch this traditional freedom. The "funders' entire campaign is a disingenuous effort to promote drug use," slurred the editor.<sup>25</sup> "They've been very clever," noted one ex-drug czar. They "are trying to normalize drug use in America."<sup>26</sup> (That people were merely questioning the punishment of *jailing* drug users was, of course, not mentioned by the ex-czar.)

Denouncing one state governor who questioned drug laws as "Pot's U.S. Poster Boy," an editor heaped scorn upon those daring to question the imprisonment of cannabis users. Raising questions about the jailing of marijuana users is just all wrong because, "it is backed by New York billionaire George Soros and other powerful forces with ulterior motives and an immoral agenda."<sup>27</sup> A politician puffed: "They'd like to take a little state like ours and spend whatever they're spending to get marijuana decriminalized; then they're gone and we're still living here."<sup>28</sup>

"A well-financed propaganda machine has sold its misinformation," warned another anti-drug activist, pounding in the theme.<sup>29</sup> You see (say prohibitionists,) never mind how much the government may spend to spread disinformation, hunt down and jail drug users, not to mention the amounts spent to attempt to interdict drugs. Never mind all of that. Rather, concentrate on a "well-financed" machine which is funded at far less than 100th of the government's anti-drug funding.

Likewise, the president of a group seeking to imprison more citizens for using marijuana decried an activist who questioned current marijuana laws. It wasn't that the activist (who questioned the punishment of jail for marijuana users) could have a point; the group president never mentioned jail at all. Instead, questioning the harshness of drug laws was "one of the many examples of the propagandizing used by those who seek to downplay the dangers of marijuana for their own self interest," or from "their sheer naiveté about the subject." The "tentacles of the legalization movement and its financial strength provided by George Soros," were corrupting America, under "the guise of freedom of speech."<sup>30</sup>

In Indiana, federal drug agents treated prohibitionist organizations to "video and statistical evidence of how marijuana law reform organizers

## Drug War Propaganda

and financiers" were informing citizens, and thereby thwarting governmental plans for prison.<sup>31</sup> The financing of governmental drug warriors was not mentioned.

### Other Hated Reformers

Users and "promoters of pot are a group of immature people acting like spoiled children," another writer complained. "I don't hold anything personally against casual users or even abusers," he explained, "but legalizing it is only one more huge waste of the honest man's money and so detrimental to families."<sup>32</sup> The writer did not explain how *ceasing* to spend government funds to jail users of a plant would waste money; as is customary the writer did not mention jailing marijuana users at all. Instead, the writer simply attacked those who dissented with the policy of jailing users.

In Canada, one man expressing disagreement with marijuana laws was roughed up by police.

"He jumped on me in front of all the kids in the kiddy area. He wrestled me to the ground in front of the five year olds. And they say my picture of marijuana is traumatizing the children."<sup>33</sup>

In New Zealand, coeds protested drug laws by drawing on the sidewalk using chalk. They were arrested, strip-searched, charged with "willful damage," held in jail for hours, and fined.<sup>34</sup> Police did not explain why those playing hopscotch weren't given similar treatment.

"Before signing a petition," (to even allow others to vote yes or no on the matter), one writer urged "people should ask the individuals carrying it a few questions: What are their views on the legalization of marijuana?"<sup>35</sup> The writer seems to suggest that if the person carrying the petition is in the wrong category of people, then others should be never be allowed to vote on the issue.

A New York paper's editorial described a judge who dissented from the party line as "The Druggie's Judge," who, in "his ongoing bid to strike down every law against the use of dangerous drugs," is sending out the wrong message.<sup>36</sup>



## **Drug War Propaganda**

Another writer excoriated columnist Ellen Goodman, who disagreed with jailing medical marijuana patients. "Goodman is uninformed, in denial or is part of the problem -- any of which is a sad trait for a journalist."<sup>37</sup> In other words, disagreement is counted as "part of the problem," the embodiment of the theme of this chapter.

Calling the Canadian people "lemmings" for refusing to arrest and jail medical marijuana patients, the a chairwoman of a "drug watch" group denounced the Canadian health minister. "Their chief legalizer, Minister of Health Canada Allan Rock, is a self-admitted pot smoker," she fumed.<sup>38</sup>

"The advocates of legalizing drugs," wrote another, "give us misery and hell." Because they question drug policy, they are "festering boils on the rump of society," the writer explained.<sup>39</sup>

One paper asserted that police actions taken against a man were justified because "through his farm, Web site and flyers," the man "long advocated the legalization of marijuana, particularly for medical purposes."<sup>40</sup> After all: the man disagreed with government policy: what further need have we of witnesses?

### **Claim Drug War Dissenters are Lying**

Prohibitionists commonly attempt to link dissenters with groups that are hated, as we have seen. The propagandist loudly claims those disagreeing with drug policy are uninformed, in denial, not appropriate for families, are naive, and are linked to wealthy billionaire financiers.

Often, the prohibitionist will simply say that those who disagree with increasing punishments for drug users, are lying. Such accusations needn't be supported with actual evidence of falsification. If the prohibitionist repeats the accusation enough, it may eventually stick.

### **"Cruel Hoax"**

The stock phrase "cruel hoax" is a favorite of the prohibition propagandist. The prohibitionist writer likes to portray medical marijuana as a "cruel hoax" that unseen evildoers have foisted on the feeble and ignorant. The prohibitionist often accuses reformers of using

## Drug War Propaganda

patients as a human shield. Medical marijuana does not provide the unique relief patients swear it does; oh no. Medical marijuana, says the propagandist, is as a "hoax" pulled over on unwitting patients by shadowy groups seeking to change the law.

One prohibitionist bureaucrat was given space in a paper to make the case for jailing medical marijuana users. "The forces' seeking to legalize drugs," explained the bureaucrat, "want smoked marijuana listed as a medicine to legitimize marijuana." This was intolerable; patients, because they disagreed with the bureaucrat, must have been hoaxed. "As a cancer survivor," continued the government official, "I am appalled at how seriously ill people have been victimized by the *cruel hoax* of medical marijuana."<sup>41</sup>

"The ruinous idea of drug legalization is back," another editorial bemoaned, as eight states have legalized marijuana and other drugs under the *hoax* of medical need."<sup>42</sup> "Smoking marijuana as medicine is a fraud," thus our children and people are "suffering with illnesses who have been misled by false claims,"<sup>43</sup> stated one prohibitionist.

"A cartel of legalizers bankrolled by George Soros and friends," warned one writer have an "ultimate reason for promoting the scam of legalizing 'medicinal' marijuana." It "is driven by their long-term goal of legalizing all drugs for recreational purposes," he revealed. "[P]romoting marijuana as a 'medicine' is a scam to legalize all drugs."<sup>44</sup>

### Government Says Dissenters are Lying

Government officials (with power, jobs and money in the balance) tend to be great and expansive supporters of prohibition. While giving these facts nary a mention, papers tend to give much play to government pronouncements and rationale. Those who question drug policy are lying, say government officials.

"Those who seek reform would have us believe that our prisons are filled with small-time drug offenders who are locked up for 15 years or more," scoffed one government prosecutor who earned his livelihood by prosecuting small-time drug users. "Most drug offenders are in prison today not because they possessed a small amount of drugs,"<sup>45</sup> the government man claimed. The prosecutor did not explain why laws

## Drug War Propaganda

allowing petty users to be jailed for decades should remain in force, if such laws were never used. Better, instead, to insinuate those who question such laws are lying.

In an attempt to counter ballot-box successes of medical marijuana referendums, a government anti-drug agency sent (at taxpayer expense) an official to present "video and statistical evidence of how marijuana law reform organizers and financiers have come out on the winning side of popular votes," an Idaho paper explained. "Their tactics have included what he called 'very expensive, prime-time media blitzes' that bowl over ill-prepared opposition with 'half-truths.'"<sup>46</sup> Wisely, the secret drug-police official did not mention government claims used to outlaw marijuana in the first place: such as claims that marijuana would turn kids into violent criminals or that pot would cause males to grow breasts, claims government has previously put forward as reason that all users must be jailed.

When citizens of Florida proposed a ballot measure giving nonviolent drug users the option of treatment over jail, the state's drug czar made known his displeasure. Allowing people to vote on the matter was all wrong; it was "an absolute hoax," he stated. Police agreed; it was "bunk" to let people vote on such things. "I would urge my supporters not to support this and better yet to tell these people to stay the hell out of Florida," threatened one sheriff.<sup>47</sup>

Likewise, a top anti-drug bureaucrat in Florida fumed against even allowing citizens to decide for themselves the course of drug policy in that state. Unable to explain why citizens should not be permitted to vote on the matter, the official instead railed against supposed supporters of the proposed ballot issue. To the government man, the "proposed amendment would be more accurately titled 'Right to Abuse Drugs.'" It was, he asserted, "a cynical, imported ballot initiative that would normalize the use of drugs," and "sophistry," and "emotional manipulation," and "outright chicanery," to even suggest that voters be allowed to vote on the matter. Citizens must not be allowed to vote on the matter because the issue was "concealing its true purpose -- the normalization of drug abuse."<sup>48</sup>

The "people who are behind the buyer's clubs and the legalization,

## Drug War Propaganda

rather the marijuana referenda, really do have a larger agenda," accused another government expert.<sup>49</sup>

The acting director of a government "Drug Control Policy" office expressed his anger over those questioning drug policy. "Pro-drug messages under the guise of 'harm reduction'," were the problem. "The American spirit is grounded in the belief that individuals are entitled to the opportunity to reach their full potential," glittered the bureaucrat. "The claimed panacea of legalization undermines this fundamental value."<sup>50</sup> The government man left off explaining how jailing adults for using a plant they were free to use until 1937 enhanced "The American spirit."

In another example, the government of Ohio also attempted to stop citizens from voting. A citizens' group attempting to put drug policy options before the voters realized that the government was *actively opposing even allowing citizens to vote on the matter*. "They filed for all state documents relating to their campaign under the Public Records Act, and the mountain of material they received in return appeared to confirm the worst. The administration not only opposes the ballot initiative, but seems to be actively thwarting efforts to allow voters the chance to decide for themselves."<sup>51</sup> Government bureaucrats were unashamed to admit that that were attempting to subvert the democratic process. One government document unearthed spoke of ways to prevent voters from voting: to "stop [the] Initiative from Appearing on Ballot."<sup>52</sup> Governmental concern for the ideals of democracy was touching. On the matter of allowing people to vote on drug policy, stated one government official: "the first and best possible defense against the proposed Constitutional amendment is to keep it off the ballot."<sup>53</sup> Shrewdly skirting the issue of blocking citizens from even voting on the matter, the governor explained that the state's drug policy was merely "a tough love, carrot-and-stick approach, with a lot of involvement from the judge and motivational factors for participating in treatment based on the threat of incarceration, and a lot of that would be totally undermined and weakened by this proposal."<sup>54</sup> You see, explain officials, in order to help save people from drugs, people must be prohibited from voting on the matter.

**Reformers: Liars, Liars!**

## Drug War Propaganda

Like their government counterparts, non-governmental prohibitionists are incensed that others wish to make drugs laws less punishing. It can't be that others are genuinely concerned over the draconian punishments government metes out to drug users. Rather, those who question drug laws must be attacked for asking such questions.

"Everything (Hager's) saying about legalization is total bullshit," snorted one prohibitionist after a debate questioning marijuana laws. "It's all just an excuse to use marijuana."<sup>55</sup>

The "legalizers," revealed another prohibitionist columnist, "used tricky, concealing language."<sup>56</sup> "The advocates of drug legalization," wrote another prohibitionist editor, repeat a "pernicious myth cited by drug-legalization supporters: that we have lost the war on drugs."<sup>57</sup>

Another writer, a doctor, saw a sinister "worldwide campaign to induce youth to start smoking cannabis," the "objective, one suspects, was to do with dulling the minds of children with disregard for their health." Ironically, to the prohibitionist writer, those questioning the government policy of jailing cannabis users were the propagandists: "The intensity and persistence of the propaganda campaign suggest the long-term stakes are high," where an "obedient cannabis propagandist rushed into print in a mindless attempt to trash" the goodly government research.<sup>58</sup>

"The well-funded drug legalization movement," cried another editorial, that is the problem. Because "millions of dollars are spent trying to deceive voters about the impact of pouring drugs into society through medicalization, decriminalization and so-called harm reduction all code words for legalization." To the editorialist, it was simply all lies. No effort was made to discuss questions had about drug policy. Rather, reformers were simply accused of lying; lying to hook kids on drugs: "False representations about the alleged harmlessness of illegal drugs hope to seduce teens into use and lull overworked parents into indifference."<sup>59</sup>

"Let's be honest about this, too," began an editorial entitled "Smoke Screen," (insinuating those who question drug policy are untruthful for doing so). Medical marijuana was merely a "front for those pushing the recreational use of the drug," cried the editor. That patients themselves might be successfully using marijuana, that the patients themselves

## Drug War Propaganda

wished to avoid jail was not considered. Instead, the reformers must be lying: "It's cynical, shameless and more than a little disingenuous for the pot pushers to hide behind terminally ill patients," which was only "pro-pot propaganda."<sup>60</sup>

And again: another paper, another editorialist, same words: "the country has been persistently subjected to well-financed and clever propaganda claiming that the problem is the drug war." The problem is that people believe "the pro-drug propaganda and have signed on to gradual drug legalization in its various forms."<sup>61</sup>

The "advocates of drug-legalization have employed a number of political and legal strategies to legitimize smoking marijuana," warned another editor. But, they lie, he wept. "They put out misleading and inaccurate information that smoking marijuana can help ill people."<sup>62</sup> The editor forgot to point out what, precisely, was inaccurate about *questioning* the punishment of jail and property forfeiture for marijuana users.

"A well-financed propaganda machine has sold its misinformation" about marijuana another writer complained, the self-styled leader of a group seeking to increase jail and other punishments for drug users. It wasn't that people opposed the punishment of jail for marijuana users. Rather, "drug advocates" were "advised to use 'medical' marijuana as a stepping-stone to legalization," the writer revealed. This was merely to "establish credibility with the media."<sup>63</sup>

After an article questioned some aspect of the drug war, prohibitionists were incensed. It was a great "disservice," one cried, "by taking up the cause of pot smoking social engineers who call for the legalization of marijuana. . . ." In other words, those who question the law are lying.<sup>64</sup> Notice how questioning the law, questioning the punishment of jail for drug users is converted into supporting or advocating use of drugs.

"Friends Of Justice Needs To Come Clean With Facts," was the headline of an editorial in a Texas paper, implying that the group was untruthful, because the group spoke of "the removal of prohibition of drugs," rather than the term "legalization."

"His claims that we must keep the young alive are clearly more anti-

## Drug War Propaganda

prohibition propaganda," wrote the leader of a prohibitionist group. The sinister plot was exposed: "This would have been noticed only by those who know who is who in the drug-legalisation push."<sup>65</sup>

Another writer, same complaint: questioning the law is only "propagandizing used by those who seek to downplay the dangers of marijuana for their own self interest, their attempt to rationalize their own use, or their sheer naiveté about the subject." In other words: those who question drug laws are either ignorant or lying. But there was no fooling this writer, for she knew of "the tentacles of the legalization movement and its financial strength provided by George Soros."<sup>66</sup>

Noted one student of drug policy: "After months of criticism, the people who head the nationwide DARE program have admitted their program is a failure. . . . This raises several question, not the least of which is why DARE's leaders strongly defended it against recent criticisms when they apparently knew at least some of the complaints were true. . . . Not only that, they often impugned the motives of their critics, attacking them as hiding an agenda to legalize drugs."<sup>67</sup>

### Dissenters Should be Silenced

*"When you consider drug use a victimless crime, you are part of the problem."*

-- Sgt. Scott Ryon, Washington County Sheriff's Office Hillsboro<sup>68</sup>

The hated dissenters, those who would question the harshness and severity of drug laws, are lying, say prohibitionists. Drug warriors tell us such people should therefore be silenced. Their questions, their words of dissent must not be allowed to contaminate others. Those who question prohibitionists are "part of the problem."

When the subject is "drugs," increased police power must never be questioned. Those who question laws must be stifled: "Posturing, barrow-pushing civil libertarians with no solutions are part of the problem and should get out of the way."<sup>69</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

It is not surprising that prohibitionists should seek to squelch dissent. US government publications forthrightly state such is a standard propaganda technique: "Another technique," states one manual, "is excluding competition. In propagandizing their own people the Soviets are careful to prevent their people from learning the other side of the story."<sup>70</sup> Prohibitionists are of similar mind.

Those who disagree with government drug policy must be silenced. Those who may question the jailing of users of this or that drug can only have done so for "shameful reasons," thus a real "government anti-drug drive" must direct "the disgust of society against" those who disagree with government.<sup>71</sup>

A UN drug control board slammed the opinions of Australians: "In its report, the INCB also said it was concerned [about] the large number of people in favour of the legalisation of drugs in Australia."<sup>72</sup> In other words: instead of respecting the wishes of people to govern accordingly, the UN instead prefers to thwart the wishes of the people, should they conflict with government. The report did not address how this situation squared with traditional ideas of democracy.

A US Senator excoriated a state party chairman for questioning drug laws as going over the line. "I don't think he should be chairman anymore," snapped the senator. "He should step down."<sup>73</sup> In other words: drug reformers should be silent, or be silenced.

One writer, angry that an editorial had questioned the appropriateness of certain punishments for drug users, accused the editorialists of being on drugs, and suggested they be silenced:

"[I] do not want to see any more editorials slanted toward going easy on drug users. . . . There are laws against drugs, and your paper should not be against those who are obeying the law in fighting drugs of any kind. Is your work place 'drug free'?"<sup>74</sup>

This is perhaps not too surprising. A common sentiment shared by many Good Americans is that those who question government drug policy should not be permitted to speak: "It is incomprehensible to me that this individual has the audacity to write about any drug not being potentially dangerous to our schools, let alone our society."<sup>75</sup>



## Drug War Propaganda

"Many of us are sick of the drug lovers or advocates letters to the editor. The drum beat is constant to legalizing marijuana," shared another writer.<sup>76</sup> To this writer, anyone who questions the jailing of drug users is either a drug lover or a drug advocate. Presumably, writing about increasing government punishments for drug users was not a problem.

In Hawaii, police testified that bird seed commercially sold (containing sterilized hemp seeds) would be all that was required to arrest and jail one who "is very locally, outwardly advocating the legalization of marijuana."<sup>77</sup> One Florida official suggested that citizens of his state be silenced, if the issue involved questioning the war on drugs. Citizens should "refuse to sign petitions [to allow a] vote" on whether or not drug addicts should be medically treated, as opposed to being jailed.<sup>78</sup>

After a paper questioned the efficacy and intent of a children's drug education program, the county prosecutor lashed out at those raising the questions. "I have never seen a reporter from your paper at any DARE graduation," he exclaimed. That the program had utterly failed was forgotten. The problem was, the prosecutor explained, "media" said too much: "The definition of success that the media seems to use is that kids should stop using alcohol or abusing drugs."<sup>79</sup> (Perhaps "the media" had simply been reading government handouts. The government prosecutor did not mention that "The primary goals of D.A.R.E. are to prevent substance abuse among schoolchildren and youth," according to the US Department of Justice.<sup>80</sup>)

When a group of citizens who questioned the jailing of marijuana users sought to enjoy the same rights as other political groups, local government banned the group from a county fair. "Fair Puts Lid On Marijuana Group," joked a local paper over the government censorship. Granting equal rights to this group just "wasn't appropriate for a family operation," claimed one official.<sup>81</sup>

Protesters outside of a Texas jail (where members of a community ethnically cleansed of drug users were being held), were videotaped for inclusion in police dossiers.<sup>82</sup> In Canada, one protesting the jailing of marijuana users was thrown to the ground, handcuffed and arrested. The RCMP silenced him by "tackling him and attempting to steal his

## Drug War Propaganda

placard while he protested Saturday afternoon amid festival crowds in Lebourdais Park." The protester had made the mistake of bearing a sign which read, "Stop the war on pot."<sup>83</sup>

A local paper, while not mentioning that out of the "arrests of 46 individuals," 45 were black people, did let on that this "has made Tulia the epicenter of national debate regarding drug policies." The paper belittled organizers as "groups more committed to drug legalization or drug reform are using Tulia to promote their agenda."<sup>84</sup> In other words, those who question drug policy should keep silent.

Farmers in one state wanted to have returned to them the right to grow industrial hemp. A writer was aghast that farmers would circulate a legally required petition that was only to allow citizens of the state to directly vote on the matter. Apparently, when the issue is anything that might call into question the means, ends, or of any aspect of the war on drugs, then citizens must not be allowed to vote. "People may be asked to sign a petition to bring the legalization of industrial hemp to a vote," began the writer. "It is believed that some advocates of the reclassification of hemp have a hidden agenda to legalize marijuana," he warned ominously, and "What are their views on the legalization of marijuana?"<sup>85</sup> Citizens themselves need be silenced, citizens themselves must be given no say or vote, assert such drug warriors, because some questioned current drug policy. In other words, the act of questioning drug policy itself is treated as sufficient reason to disenfranchise all who may question drug policy.

One prohibitionist DC columnist ironically bemoaned coverage of the "so-called mainstream media," because some questioned a prospective bureaucrat's intentions toward medical marijuana users. To the prohibitionist, articles presented the bureaucrat (Asa Hutchinson) as if he were "a heartless dog kicker," because of such impertinent questioning.<sup>86</sup>

An activist who questioned drug laws in Oregon was continually "handcuffed and arrested, harassed and assaulted" because he observed and reported police activities.<sup>87</sup> Another paper suggested that "advocacy of marijuana" was sufficient reason to investigate, arrest and possibly shoot those doing so.<sup>88</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

In Jamaica, a government panel recommended ceasing the arrest and imprisonment of drug users. "The early reaction of the Americans to these recommendations, through its embassy officials here in Kingston, is one of opposition and threat of retaliation, reported one paper.<sup>89</sup> That is to say, any deviation from the US Government line on marijuana will bring US Government retaliation upon those daring to disagree. Dissent is the problem: those who question drug policy must be silenced.

A UK Police Foundation report recommended that cannabis users no longer be jailed. Noting that the government inquiry "had no need to be politically correct in order to be re-elected," and thus did not need to "to spin government propaganda," one paper commented on the idea of questioning drug policy.

"The Government pours an ever-increasing amount of money into an industry aimed at combating the use and supply of illegal drugs. Its henchmen, led by the tsar, and including law-enforcers, drug education teams and health workers, do its bidding. But it is run like the Mafia. You keep your job, you get your funding, as long as you don't question the law or the Government's strategies."<sup>90</sup>

In Oregon, radio stations that played hours of government messages demonising drug users refused to run a short ad paid for by a couple questioning government drug laws. "Portland's KUFO-FM . . . turned them down. KUFO wasn't alone in such thinking. Jeff and Tracy, both 39, have also been turned down by Portland's KNRK-FM, KGON-FM, KKRZ-FM, KKCW-FM and KEX-AM, and by stations in Seattle and Bend."<sup>91</sup> Attempts by the couple to advertise on buses and in local papers were also turned down as 'unsuitable for publication.'

Noted one attorney of the police harassment of one questioning marijuana laws: "There's little question in my mind that Ms. Wolfe's activism and outspoken approach to this issue focused attention on her . . . I believe that these charges would not be pending but for her vocal support for the reform of marijuana laws."<sup>92</sup>

The situation was the same in British Columbia. Noting the candidates who questioned drug laws were banned from debates, even one paper was moved to comment on the "Undemocratic" exclusion of candidates for their political views as "media-controlled news."<sup>93</sup>

## Drug War Propaganda

"BCTV's decision to bar the Marijuana party from he leaders' debate was a total abrogation of its responsibility as a disseminator of news,"<sup>94</sup> the paper warned. Such bannings are the rule, not the exception. Those who question drug policy, says the prohibitionist, must be silenced.

In June 2000, UN International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) announced that "universal jurisdiction" was needed to prosecute people who "disseminate information about drugs" on the Internet. Why? Because "views [about drugs which contradict government assertions] are spreading and we are now thinking about some instrument to at least stop the expansion of this flow of information."<sup>95</sup> A 1997 INCB report "sternly chastises various member nations for possessing the temerity to *allow open discourse* in regard to global anti-drug strategies."<sup>96</sup> Article III of the Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988), stated the INCB report forces nations to prosecute those who "publicly incit[e] or induc[e] others by any means" to use drugs. The California and Arizona medical marijuana campaigns were singled out.<sup>97</sup>

In a research report released in 2000, researchers (re)discovered that cannabis shrank tumors in mice. A year after that news was reported (reported as a small item buried in a few papers), a paper reprinted the item. "We reprint it here and pose the question, why would the government want to keep us from knowing this?" the paper asked.<sup>98</sup>

The report detailed a pattern of silencing dissent and of official suppression of research.

"In 1974, researchers at the Medical College of Virginia, who had been funded by the National Institutes of Health to find evidence that marijuana damages the immune system, found instead that THC slowed the growth of three kinds of cancer in mice -- lung and breast cancer, and a virus-induced leukemia." A government secret drug police agency "quickly shut down the Virginia study and all further cannabis/tumor research."<sup>99</sup>

The government even purged universities of politically sensitive reports, some said: The "Reagan/Bush Administration tried to persuade American universities and researchers to destroy all 1966-76 cannabis research work, including compendiums in libraries."<sup>100</sup> The

## **Drug War Propaganda**

contemporary memory-hole is as big as ever. "News coverage of the Madrid discovery has been virtually nonexistent in this country," continued the paper. Newspapers large and small pretended nothing had happened. "The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times all ignored the story, even though its newsworthiness is indisputable: a benign substance occurring in nature destroys deadly brain tumors."<sup>101</sup>

Noted a student of media drug policy: "Even when reformers have cold, hard cash, it's often hard for those who disagree with governmental policy to buy into the mass media."<sup>102</sup>

### **Dissenters cause children to take drugs**

Those who question drug laws, say prohibitionists, cause children to take drugs. They do this by 'sending out the wrong message.' In this prohibitionist scenario, dissent, rational discussion, and disagreement are allowed in other areas of life. But for the special case of "drugs," then no questions are allowed. To permit any questions about drug policy, say drug warriors, would be to 'send mixed signals,' thereby confusing children, leading them to "drugs." Such must not be permitted.

To question drug policy, says the propagandist, is to advocate poisoning of children: "those who continue to claim that there is nothing wrong with peddling poisons to children" are the problem, they say. Those questioning drug laws are merely "drug dealers and their supporters," who "claim that it ought to be treated as a public health problem." It is "nothing more than a self serving excuse for poisoners who wish to distribute dangerous chemicals" to our children.<sup>103</sup> Those who question drug policy "have always targeted adolescents and young adults for recruits,"<sup>104</sup> asserted another prohibitionist.

"Those who claim to reduce harm while promoting drug use . . . send [a] complex, confusing, and erroneous message," read a prohibitionist ad in a Miami paper.<sup>105</sup> In other words: questioning drug policy is wrong because of the confusing messages prohibitionists claim will be sent.

The hated "proponents of legalization actively promote drugs and a

## Drug War Propaganda

drug-using lifestyle to our children via the Internet directly into their classrooms and into their homes," revealed another writer.<sup>106</sup>

"Legalization or liberalizing drug laws would increase both drug acceptance and accessibility," which "would send the wrong message to young people," echoed another prohibitionist.<sup>107</sup> Because of this "message" that prohibitionists assure us would be sent, no questions should be permitted.

A group of citizens, fed up with the selective prosecution of medical marijuana patients on their county, began a petition to recall the local prosecutor. The prosecutor called such a legal remedy "thuggish," insinuating those who wanted the recall election were somehow child-corrupting drug dealers: "Are these the people . . . who sell drugs to our kids?"<sup>108</sup>

Chicago government officials likewise denied an activist a permit to speak in a public park -- a park where others were permitted to speak -- because the activist called for legalizing marijuana.<sup>109</sup>

An editorialist agreed with government: the end goal of preventing children from using marijuana justifies elimination of concerns that the punishment should fit the crime. This is because once a penalty (for using drugs) is in place, that penalty must never be reduced. To reduce a penalty, we are assured by prohibitionists, would be to encourage children to use drugs: "How are kids supposed to reconcile that message with police issuing what amounts to a traffic ticket for possession of marijuana?"<sup>110</sup>

To reduce in any way the penalties for using marijuana would send a "mixed message" to "kids who've been schooled in the life-threatening potential of drug abuse."<sup>111</sup> No studies or any other evidence for this notion need be presented. The mere accusation that children might be confused over a technical reduction in punishment for using marijuana is, to drug warriors, proof enough.

"With the start of the university year, the pro-cannabis propaganda pack will be hunting for a new crop of victims," began another writer. It isn't that some people honestly object to jailing people for a private choice. Rather, the idea is that those who question drug laws are "pro-" drug;

## **Drug War Propaganda**

the idea is that these vicious "pro-" drug people are making children take drugs. "A choice prize would be a student," quivered the writer, "who is willing to boast openly that he or she smokes cannabis regularly."<sup>112</sup>

"Marijuana decriminalization would send a negative message to children and the rest of the nation regarding the use of drugs," asserted the head of a prosecutors association, which, coincidentally, stood to lose money if marijuana arrests stopped.<sup>113</sup>

One writer lashed out at a newspaper for questioning the drug war. Such questions, the writer asserted, were "slanted toward going easy on drug users" because, "Drug use is ruining the lives of too many of our young people (their brains are 'fried')."<sup>114</sup> In other words, don't criticize the war on drugs, because doing so will cause children to take drugs. Another writer blasted one as "uneducated," and "self-serving" because "this individual has the audacity to write about any drug not being potentially dangerous to our schools, let alone our society."<sup>115</sup> Those who question drug policy should be silent.

Railing against a Governor who questioned drug policy, a leader of a national 'family' group explained why discussion of drug policy must be only be in the direction of making the laws ever more harsh, for questioning government drug policy "adds credibility to the argument that we ought to change drug policy, and that's a bad message for our kids."<sup>116</sup>

Experts, officials, and authorities all sing in unison: drug laws must never be changed (or made less harsh, at least): "legalizing drugs 'sends the wrong message to our children.'"<sup>117</sup>

### **Reformers Should be Jailed**

Experts, officials and authorities agree that drug policy reformers are causing children to take drugs. What is to be done? Prohibitionists have various suggestions. Government force, coercion, punishment and jail are, for them, the preferred tools.

The idea that it is acceptable to jail those who suggest changing the laws is the idea the propagandist is peddling. Some subjects are

## Drug War Propaganda

acceptable, perhaps, for debate. To the prohibitionist, however, *no* debate may be permitted, if the subject is the drug laws. The next logical step is to jail those who disagree with drug laws. Some have already suggested this.

In California, a man gathering signatures for a petition was arrested because his petition was for "a countywide initiative to legalize the personal use of marijuana."<sup>118</sup>

After a "Drug Dealer's Liability" law was passed in one area, the director for a prohibitionist lobbyist organization openly called for expanding the law to be used against "anyone who openly promotes drug use . . . those who entice others, either directly or indirectly, to become involved with illicit drugs."<sup>119</sup> Presumably, those who call for reforming drug laws would fall into that category.

In Hawaii, local police likewise prosecuted one activist for possessing birdseed because the activist was "very locally, outwardly advocating the legalization of marijuana."<sup>120</sup>

Police, prosecutors and bureaucrats whose incomes depend on continuing and escalating the drug war agree: those who disagree are threatened with jail. When police tell reformers to get out of the state, for example, jail need not even be mentioned.<sup>121</sup>

A statement on an activist's site espousing "the medical, spiritual and responsible recreational uses of marijuana" was all the evidence one paper needed to hear. Because the activist had suggested changing the law, police were justified in taking whatever actions against the activist that were deemed needed, the paper insinuated.<sup>122</sup>

In another example, a drug reformer in Canada was raided and arrested. A sign on his property evidently had irked police; it read, "Legalize marijuana now." After raiding his property, "police removed the infamous sign displaying a cannabis leaf."<sup>123</sup>

In one instance, an activist who wrote a book about medical marijuana was jailed; police insisted that the man's views on changing the law had nothing to do with the matter.<sup>124</sup> Another activist was also hounded by police after "he gave a speech to the Libertarian Party National



## Drug War Propaganda

Convention in which he fulminated against both the Clinton administration and the DEA."<sup>125</sup> When government officials threatened to seize his mother's house if he did not quit *using* marijuana, the activist died, choking to death on his own vomit after being denied the only medicine which had worked for him: marijuana.

Police actions to stop citizens from speaking out on matters of drug policy are not surprising. Indeed, a report issued by a US secret drug police agency (the National Drug Intelligence Center), recommended that "legalization advocates" be targeted for scrutiny by police intelligence units.<sup>126</sup>

In 1999, US Representative Bob Barr declared that anyone who speaks out for peaceful changes of the laws should be prosecuted under RICO statutes, if the proposed changes involve any lessening of penalties for the use of drugs (especially marijuana). Unconcerned with the implications for free speech, self-government, or democracy, Barr suggested this in a congressional hearing.

BARR: [W]e've had some discussion here today of Mr. Soros (PH) and others funding the marijuana legalization movement.

Aside from what a number of us would like to see, and that is a more perhaps activist or pro-activist role by our Department of Justice in rebutting and fighting these efforts, is any consideration being given to possible prosecution, under perhaps the racketeering title of Chapter 96 with Title 18? . . . It might have a chilling effect on the drug legalization movement, which might not be bad.<sup>127</sup>

### Dissenters Executed

Although America prides itself on being "the land of the free" -- where dissenting opinions are permitted -- when the subject is 'drugs,' the reality of the situation is quite different. If the dissenters wish to change the drug laws, to change them by making them less harsh, then such talk (say prohibitionists) must not be permitted. If some "druggies" want to change the law, then who would complain if such people are executed? This is the approach that the prohibitionist propagandist must take. Of course, those activists gunned down by government are not killed

## Drug War Propaganda

because they held a particular belief, oh no. They are hurt and even killed for some other reason, we are told.

During the presidency of former CIA Director George Bush, the National Security Council reportedly prepared approval for death squad murders of suspected drug dealers. America's top drug police officer William Bennett declared that ethically no trial is required before killing citizens suspected of drug dealing. The next day Bennett said of drug dealers, "You deserve to die." (In law a "dealer" can be someone who hands a marijuana cigarette to a friend.) Bennett expressed satisfaction over the murder of "drug dealers" whose guilt was never proven in court.<sup>128</sup>

True, it may not yet be fashionable to *openly* call for the execution of those who question drug laws. Still, the rhetoric of prohibition does portray those who speak out against drug laws as drug users, drug users who therefore may be excusably annihilated by government with little concern for consequences. Noted one researcher:

With senior drug warriors supporting secret death squads and public lynchings, we should not be surprised if warriors also advocate formal executions. Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates had national influence on drug war strategy and tactics. The DARE program he founded and designed has been adopted nationwide. In 1990 he advised the U.S. Senate about the "'casual user' and what you do with the whole group. The casual user ought to be taken out and shot, because he or she has no reason for using drugs." Gates later emphasized that "he was not being facetious" and declared marijuana users to be guilty of treason. Calling Gates "one of the all-American heroes," President Bush continued rhetoric used by Ronald and Nancy Reagan, rhetoric inflaming public opinion by portraying drug users as murderers.<sup>129</sup>

If drug "users" receive such treatment with nary a voice raised in protest, when those who question drug laws are targeted, will anyone even notice? "We have seen drug users hounded from jobs, homes, and communities as an orchestrated nationwide campaign of hate rhetoric

## Drug War Propaganda

portrayed them as bums, perverts, and murderers deserving to die," wrote historian Richard Miller. If the inhabitants of "the land of the free" nod at this, will not such people cheer if those who challenge drug laws are executed?

In Michigan, two drug law reformers ran a campground featuring "hemp festivals" and other drug-law reform gatherings. This did not sit well with local authorities. Initiating a forfeiture proceeding to seize the farm, officials claimed that drugs were distributed to children and manufactured on the property. Government official and journalist marched in lockstep: all blame for the governments' actions against the men was to be laid upon the men themselves.

In a matter of days, FBI agents were called in. The pretext given was an alleged potshot taken at a news helicopter. No matter: it was all over in little time. The men were summarily executed by FBI snipers. Predictably, much of the press blamed the men's political position on drug law reform for their deaths.

One after another, papers insinuated the men's political beliefs and speech were reason enough for government to kill them.

"Passionate about his belief in the legalization of marijuana and in the righteousness of personal freedom. Those passions likely contributed to his death Monday afternoon," proclaimed one.<sup>130</sup> The government's zealous hunting down of marijuana users, that was never the issue. Ignore that, the propagandist suggests. Ignore history, the rationale for making marijuana illegal; ignore the effects of marijuana. Ignore all that. Instead, says the prohibitionist, pay attention to (what the press presents as) the whacky political beliefs of the dead reformers.

Nearly every sentence that told of the events, immediately justified the government by explaining that the men advocated the legalization of marijuana. "Campground Owner Killed After Four-Day Standoff . . . The standoff began Friday after gunfire was reported on the campground, which according to its Web site advocates legalizing the use of marijuana."<sup>131</sup> Apparently, many consider that advocating the legalization of marijuana to be reason enough for summary execution by a government de facto death squad.

## Drug War Propaganda

When one of the reformers was arrested on marijuana charges earlier, authorities let be known their true target, which was a political one: "He was released on bond but told not to hold any more festivals."<sup>132</sup> The farm/campground owners had held a series of marijuana events which questioned the drug laws. This was not to be tolerated.

"On June 29, Cass County Circuit Judge Michael E. Dodge issued an order prohibiting Crosslin from holding festival gatherings . . . On Aug. 17-18, 'Crosslin directly violated this order and held a festival at Rainbow Farm,' the press release said. "<sup>133</sup>

"Pro-Pot Activist Killed In Standoff," screamed another headline, cementing the desired association.<sup>134</sup> Being "pro-pot" (that is, questioning the laws that jail pot users), is, obviously, explanation enough for government hit squads to dispatch the politically errant.

Great play was made of the peaceful political rallies held there. The campground owners "promoted marijuana." The "High Times magazine" had mentioned the campground on a website. One of the owners used the campground to "promote the 'medical, spiritual and responsible recreational use of marijuana for a more sane and compassionate America,'" stated a paper. "He hosted two annual hemp festivals -- Hemp Aid and RoachRoast."<sup>135</sup> Having so vilified drug law reformers as the most abominable of drug addicts, having equated any breach from the prohibitionist party line with total access to all drugs by children, such government killings are more than justified, says the rhetoric of prohibition.

Because the activists' "Passions Led To Downfall," as one headline patiently repeated the government explanations, we are not to worry. We need only remain silent and dispassionate, implies government and press.

"An ardent supporter of marijuana legalization," the man shot was "known for holding festivals and concerts" which questioned the government drug policy of imprisoning drug users.<sup>136</sup>

While relatives noted "he never bought or sold drugs on his property, and that anyone caught doing so would be kicked off the farm,"<sup>137</sup> press accounts painted a lurid picture of events, where, "visitors allegedly got

## Drug War Propaganda

high."<sup>138</sup>

"This is not about whether marijuana should be legalized," asserted a local prosecutor, who at the same time justified the killings: "You can't ignore the laws you don't agree with."<sup>139</sup>

After a prosecutor absolved other government officials of any wrongdoing, the events were summarized by a local paper. The "men who had operated the Rainbow Farm campground, were shot and killed on successive days early last September after a prolonged standoff with police at the campground. Rainbow Farm for years was known as a popular gathering spot for those who believe that marijuana should be legalized."<sup>140</sup> The insinuation is repeated. Those people believe that drug laws should be changed! Is that not reason enough to kill them?

### Summary

We have seen some of the ways that the prohibitionist attacks reformers, rather than responding to their points. Those who question prohibitionist rationale and rhetoric can expect to be assailed as "part of the problem which needs to be eliminated."<sup>141</sup> We have briefly looked at ways the propaganda of prohibition attacks those who question drug laws: attacking them by associating reformers with hated groups. We have examined examples of rhetoric where reformers are accused of being drug pushers, wealthy fat-cats, hoaxers, addicts, liars, and child-poisoners. We have seen prohibitionist rhetoric call for the jailing of dissenters. We have seen examples of government death squads sent to kill drug reformers. Sadly, we observe leaders hail the killing of those who suggest changing drug laws.

This, writes one historian, is the

"result of years of continual hate propaganda. Without such vilification, the war on drug users would be impossible, because citizens would recoil from persecuting people no different from themselves. Drug war propagandists serve the same function that Nazi propagandists served, a function judged harshly at Nuremberg."<sup>142</sup>

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