

The Dope On Legal Pot

A number of political and economic factors are at work to create a seemingly irresistible momentum promoting unrestrained medical and recreational use of marijuana in the U.S.

One impetus involves the alleged medical benefits of the drug, which are said to include pain relief, the alleviation of anxiety, lowered risk of diabetes, better sleep, and increased appetite for those on chemotherapy.

These claims are based on the alleged benefits from an extracted component of the plant called *Cannabidiol*, or CBD for short. It can be ingested as an oil, included in food, or introduced by inhaling the drug's fumes in a process termed "vaping."

There are as many studies that refute the claims of the drug's beneficial effects as there are studies promoting them. Since most studies are of fairly recent vintage, the side effects of long term use have not yet been thoroughly evaluated.

There is a general absence of safety standards for the consumption of pot or its CBD component, even under medical supervision. In some ways the current medical acceptance of CBD and its claimed benefits mirror earlier enthusiasms for opioids, which precipitated our current opioid epidemic.

It should not come as a great surprise if a campaign were to soon blossom that promotes pot as a substitute for opioids, based on their

greater affordability, the fact that they can be home grown, and the fact that its consumption would not require a physician's prescription to obtain it.

As a matter of fact, the ***New York State Department of Health***

has enacted regulations that would allow the use of medical marijuana as a substitute for any condition for which opioids are prescribed. So, rather than use one type of drug to replace another, we could very well have full-blown epidemics resulting from the use of both drugs.

The decriminalization or legalization of pot is basically a leftist crusade, with some philosophical justification provided by the Libertarians. Once the left initiates a crusade like this, their flacks in the Corrupt Leftist Media will relentlessly promote it until these enthusiasms eventually become accepted.

The Democrat Party has made decriminalization or legalization of pot part of its Party platform. Republicans have mostly remained silent on this issue, just as they often do before they test the political wind for the scent of campaign donations or political support. The Libertarians are enthusiastic about decriminalization and legalization, just as they are about every destructive vice. Thus, there is no viable political opposition to this movement.

Legalization of pot by all fifty states would garner nearly \$50 Billion in annual sales tax revenues and an estimated one million jobs. Since many states are currently experiencing a static tax base and various stages of austerity, the marijuana industry is viewed as a panacea to help sustain their spendthrift ways. Politicians of all stripes will feel the need to support pot because of its fiscal benefits.

Marijuana stocks have been promoted intently since the campaign for decriminalization or legalization started to gain momentum. This will drive up demand for these stocks and increase the number of people

holding these stocks, who will then have a vested financial interest in marijuana, further increasing the pressure on politicians to enact or adopt pro-pot legislation.

So-called "*Pot Scientists*" have been working to create varieties of the hemp plant with greater concentrations of THC – tetrahydrocannabinol – the active ingredient in the plant. This allows it to be grown on smaller plots of land requiring less overhead. The more potent varieties look, smell, and taste like weaker varieties, and indistinguishable from them.

All this enthusiasm for decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana means that the country really is going to pot. The only question remaining is will there be any "splendor" in the grass Americans use to fry their noggins?

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