

So why was cannabis suddenly prohibited? Read on..

Cannabis mis-represented

In 1894 the British and Indian Governments Hemp Drugs Commission ruled out prohibition of cannabis and said that the social use of cannabis was acceptable. They also denied previous claims that cannabis caused insanity. However, the world was changing quickly. Addiction to narcotic opiates was becoming a serious concern in the Western world, and moves were being made to ban them. On the other hand the cannabis hemp plant was seen as a serious obstacle to the huge profits which could be made from the synthetic alternatives to cannabis products - chemical drugs, fossil fuels, and chemicals for cotton and wood pulp. It was not a difficult matter to convince delegates at the 1924 Opiates Conference in Geneva, that cannabis was also a dangerous and addictive 'narcotic'. This was done by delegates from Egypt, (where hemp threatened the valuable cotton exports) who claimed that some of their people suffered from 'chronic hashism' and insanity due to smoking cannabis. The conference set up a special committee to look into cannabis, but before they had time to report a Second Conference decided to include cannabis in the list of prohibited substances. Britain abstained in the vote. Cannabis became mis-classified as a narcotic drug.

Under the conditions of the conference Britain created the Dangerous Drugs Act in 1928, which banned cannabis along with heroin, opium and cocaine, except for medicinal use.

Once the Western world had accepted that cannabis was dangerous and had made it illegal in their countries, the next step was to eradicate hemp completely.

In the USA vast quantities of cannabis were being grown for fibre, as well as being used medicinally, religiously and socially, without problem. However, pharmaceutical companies were patenting new drugs. Petrochemical companies were preparing to monopolise the fuel supplies and replace natural hemp products by synthetics such as plastics and nylon, as well as take control of the paper industry, and supply vast amounts of chemical fertilisers and pesticides to less sturdy crops such as cotton and tobacco. There was huge pressure to outlaw cannabis hemp and tycoons such as William Hearst (newspapers and timber), companies such as DuPont, and public servants such as Anslinger, worked together on a campaign which was to convince the public that smoking 'marijuana' (a racist term they used to avoid associating it with the friendly cannabis plant), was likely to cause 'reefer madness' and lead to rape and murder. Anslinger told of plots by

'ginger haired niggers' to undermine society by spreading the cannabis 'addiction'.

In the USA the Marijuana Transfer Tax banned cannabis as a crop. This was pushed through the legislative processes quickly and without the knowledge of the American Medical Association which had long recognised cannabis as a medicine. In fact the only people who were able to attempt to oppose the law were the seed companies, which is why cannabis seed remained legal as bird food. Anslinger went on to control the attempts at eradicating hemp until he was eventually sacked by President John Kennedy, who was said to have used cannabis to ease back pains.

However, during the time World War II broke out, American policy had to change in order to produce the necessary fibre for war. 'Reefer Madness' was rapidly, but temporarily, dropped in favour of a 'Hemp for Victory' campaign and farmers were required to grow cannabis. After the war Anslinger continued to publicly campaign that cannabis drove people crazy and made them violent, right up until the Vietnam War when he then blamed cannabis for pacifying American troops.

The world-wide campaign against cannabis continues until the present day. Further International Treaties, such as the UN Single Drugs Convention of 1961, officially denied that cannabis had any therapeutic properties and classified it alongside highly addictive, toxic and dangerous synthetic drugs. Further changes in national laws, including, in Britain, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, increased penalties, withdrew cannabis as a medicine, and banned its cultivation for any reason. This situation has resulted in the prosecution of millions of people around the world, some of whom are even now serving life sentences and longer for small amounts of cannabis, often solely for medicinal use. These include William Foster who was sentenced to serve 93 years in Texas recently; he suffers from chronic rheumatoid arthritis. The prohibition of cannabis and the widespread use of the synthetic alternatives is responsible for many of today's problems, including the drugs problem, alienation of huge sections of populations, over-crowding of prisons, pollution, unemployment and increased suffering. Britain alone spends over half a billion pounds a year 'fighting' drugs, resulting in 83% of arrests being for cannabis 'offences' - over 80,000 people - and the problem is getting worse.

In the face of the many testimonies from medical users of illegal cannabis and the huge social and ecological problems caused by, and resulting from, prohibition of cannabis, we need to ask: "Was the prohibition of cannabis justified?" What do the scientists and doctors say? Is cannabis as harmful as was claimed - or have we all been conned by money-motivated conspirators?

What the experts say

- **UK ROYAL COMMISSION, WOOTTON REPORT 1966** said: "there is no evidence that (any) serious dangers are associated with the smoking of cannabis", and "cannabis does not lead to heroin addictions" and that there was no evidence that cannabis caused "conditions of dependence or psychosis requiring medical treatment."
- **US JAMAICAN STUDY 1974** said : "No impairment of physiological, sensory, and perceptual performance, tests of concept formation, abstracting ability, and cognitive style, and tests of memory."
- **DR. ANDREW WEIL (RUBIN & COMITAS GANJA IN JAMAICA, 1975)** said : "a-motivation [is] a cause of heavy marijuana smoking rather than the reverse."
- **DEA JUDGE FRANCIS YOUNG'S REPORT, 1988**, said "[cannabis is] far safer than many foods we commonly consume" and "in its natural form it is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man."
- **UK JUDGE JAMES PICKLES SAID IN 1992** : "Cannabis never killed anybody and its use is widespread. You can't stop it. The law defeats itself because all the efforts to stop drugs coming in only drives up the prices and the gangsters move in to push the drugs."
- **AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REPORT 1994**, "Cannabis has been erroneously classified as a narcotic, as a sedative and most recently as an hallucinogen. While the cannabinoids do possess hallucinogenic properties, together with stimulant and sedative effects, they in fact represent a unique class of pharmacological compounds."
- **US DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES, CRANCER STUDY**, said: "Simulated driving scores for subjects experiencing a normal social 'high' and the same subjects under control conditions are not significantly different."
- **UK JOURNAL THE LANCET, NOV. 1995** said "The smoking of cannabis, even long term, is not harmful to health"
- **US NATIONAL TOXICOLOGY PROGRAM REPORT 1997** said : "... found absolutely no evidence of cancer."
- **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, UCLA, 1997** said : "Neither the continuing nor the intermittent marijuana smokers exhibited any significantly different rates of decline in [lung function] as compared with those individuals who never smoked marijuana."

WHY IS CANNABIS STILL ILLEGAL?

In the face of the evidence presented by the official government sponsored scientific studies and reports, which exonerate cannabis from harmfulness, most governments of the world refuse to re-legalise cannabis. The British Government goes further, simply refusing any open discussion or debate. The medical benefits of cannabis as reported in the many anecdotes of users, is consistently denied. Recent moves by the people of California and Arizona, through the democratic process, to allow cannabis as a medicine, have met with total opposition from the US Government, to the point of threatening to arrest users and doctors alike. Cannabis has been declared as 'remarkably safe, by the BMA and Prof Lester Grinspoon of Harvard University. There has never been a single death attributed solely to cannabis. The European Union has recommended decriminalisation of cannabis (Oct 1997), and a huge proportion of the British public support an easing of law, including many doctors, barristers and professionals. The Governments of Holland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Greece are moving towards legalisation. Every argument against legalisation which has been presented by the British Government has been shown to be false; their last reason is simply that legalisation of cannabis would 'send out the wrong message that it is OK to take drugs.', seemingly admitting lack of control over their own public announcements.

Surely there must be more to it than that?
THERE IS....

As mentioned earlier huge amounts of money have been made from the variety of companies and individual investors concerned in the production of the alternatives to cannabis. These are the people who selfishly oppose legalisation, and will continue to do so until they devise a scheme to take control and grab the profits from the many applications of cannabis, even at the price of a polluted world - then they can sell us air and water purifiers - at a profit! The real reason for continued prohibition, is profit.

'The Profiteers'

These are some of the businesses who continue to profit from the prohibition of the cannabis hemp plant and its produce:

- Chemical companies - cotton requires large amounts of chemical fertiliser and pesticides, unlike cannabis which produces stronger and more durable fibres.
- Plastics industry - many plastic products could be made from natural cannabis without pollution.
- Timber industry - cannabis 'hurds' (the woody bits of stalk) can be used to make furniture as well as a paper of superior quality than that made from wood.
- Tobacco and alcohol industries - if more people turned to the safer and non-addictive recreational pastime than their products.
- Pharmaceutical companies who may profit less if ill people are able to grow their own medicine in preference to their many dangerous and addictive synthetic drugs which the same people claim are less effective than cannabis.
- The employees of the criminal justice industry and supportive industries including police, lawyers, barristers, court officials, prison staff, probation services, drug counsellors, forensic scientists, customs officers and security firms, who may suffer if 100,000 less prosecutions are brought each year.
- AND..... MOST IMPORTANTLY...
- The fuel companies including fossil, nuclear and solar. The Report of the FCDA Europe, endorsed by Judges, Doctors & academics, reveals, for the first time, the CANNABIS BIOMASS ENERGY EQUATION, which shows beyond doubt that cannabis-derived fuel, capable of providing almost all of our domestic and industrial energy requirements as well as running all of our cars without pollution, is easily a CHEAPER and safer form of viable energy. It is the huge oil and nuclear industries which have the main profit motivations for continued prohibition at any cost. The FCDA Report reveals the true motives behind both past and present prohibition, and reveals the law itself as illegal!

Why cannabis is illegal



Until the end of the last century cannabis, also known as hemp, had been used throughout the world for centuries, for a variety of reasons. For ages human beings in many parts of the globe had used the highly nutritious cannabis seed as a source of food. In fact it is still one of the most nutritious seeds on earth. Various parts of the plant had been used to make most of the world's paper including Bibles, maps and charts, writing paper etc; also most rope, sails and tents (the word 'cannabis' is derived from the Dutch word 'canvas'), lubricants, paint base, and fuel. Cannabis had been, and still is, regarded as a sacrament by religions such as Coptic Christians, Hindus, Moslems, Buddhists and, later, Rastafarians and New Age Churches.

Cannabis had been used as a medicine since the times of the Ancient Chinese and Egyptians. It is still claimed to ease the suffering of many millions of people today. These include those afflicted with Multiple Sclerosis, AIDS, glaucoma, migraine, epilepsy, asthma, insomnia, spinal injury, loss of appetite, arthritis, depression and nausea particularly associated with chemotherapy on cancer patients. Cannabis was available as a tincture in the UK until 1971. Now the natural ameliorative plant is totally illegal.

Cannabis was an essential crop in many countries for its various uses. In Britain there are several places named after the hemp plant : Hempsall, Hampstead Heath etc. In Wymondham in Norfolk, last century, a prison work house received a commendation for its profitable cannabis business.

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