

The **NORML** Legislative Bulletin

A guide to current marijuana policy developments from NORML

Great Britain Goes Decrim!

Government Declares Pot Restrictions Will Be Eased By Spring

Reefers rebellion has come to England! In a dramatic drug-policy shake-up, Britain's government has announced that marijuana possession will no longer be an arrestable offense in the UK. The sweeping national policy change places Britain firmly in line with its progressive European Union neighbors — many of whom no longer criminalize the use of marijuana or other drugs — and squarely at odds with American drug warriors.

Newly appointed Home Secretary David Blunkett abruptly declared the policy change on October 23, three months after Parliament's House of Commons agreed to reevaluate Britain's marijuana laws. Under the new policy, marijuana will be reclassified as a "Class C" or "soft" drug, putting it in the same category as anti-depressants and steroids.

"It is time for an honest and common sense approach focusing effectively on drugs that cause the most harm," explained Blunkett, who criticized police for focusing too much of their anti-drug efforts on marijuana smokers. "Given...the very clear difference between cannabis and 'Class A' drugs [such as heroin and cocaine, it is time] to reclassify cannabis from 'Class B' to 'Class C.'"

Although possession of "Class C" drugs technically carries a two-year maximum prison term, only offenses punishable by at least five years imprisonment are arrestable in England. As a result, pot smokers will likely face only a verbal warning or a court summons if they are found with small amounts of pot.



British Home Secretary David Blunkett

"It's *de facto* decriminalization," lauds NORML Executive Director Keith Stroup. "By eliminating the threat of arrest and jail for responsible adult marijuana smokers, police and criminal justice resources can be focused on more serious and violent crimes."

England's "October surprise" is the latest in a series of drug policy reforms sweeping Europe. In the past year, governments in Belgium, Luxembourg and Portugal have all decriminalized the use and possession

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DEA Wages War on California's Medical Pot Clubs

If nothing else, drug war ultra-hawk Asa Hutchinson is a man of his word. Since taking over in July as acting director of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Hutchinson has brought the full weight of the Justice Department down upon California's medical marijuana dispensaries and providers, and thousands of seriously ill patients are paying the price.

"Asa Hutchinson is waging war against the sick and dying," charges NORML Publications Director Paul Armentano. "As a Congressman, he opposed research into marijuana's medical

value and lobbied for federal legislation overturning state medical marijuana laws. During his Senate confirmation, he threatened to prosecute any and all who dared violate the federal government's blanket pot prohibition. And now as head of DEA, he's commanding an unprecedented assault on California's medical marijuana community."

In October, Hutchinson oversaw a federal raid on the Los Angeles Cannabis Resource Center (LACRC) — southern California's largest and most respected medical marijuana dis-

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Legislative Bulletin is published by NORML. ©2002



INTERNATIONAL

UK Pot Trials Dub Weed a “Wonder Drug”

Evidence of marijuana’s therapeutic prowess continues to pour in from overseas. Most recently, researchers from Britain’s GW Pharmaceuticals announced that approximately 80 percent of multiple sclerosis and spinal cord patients participating in clinical trials have obtained documented medical benefits from sublingual (under the tongue) extracts of the herb—a revelation that led London’s *Guardian Unlimited* newspaper to proclaim cannabis a “wonder drug.”

“Until now, claims of [pot’s] benefits for certain conditions have been anecdotal. But the preliminary results of the UK government trial... suggest that 80 percent of those taking part have derived more benefit from cannabis than from any other drug, with many describing it as ‘miraculous,’” reported the newspaper’s health editor. “The[se] results make it almost inevitable that the government will bow to public pressure and legalize cultivation of cannabis for medical purposes by 2002.”

Speaking about their results at this year’s annual meeting of the American Academy of Pain Management (AAPM) conference, GW Pharmaceuticals Chairman Geoffrey Guy explained, “Somehow a million years of evolution between cannabis and humans have come up with an amazing medicine.” Guy’s company is evaluating several cannabis-based medicinal extracts in double-blind, placebo-controlled randomized trials to determine each strain’s quality, safety and efficacy.

According to Guy, 41 of the 53 patients enrolled in GW’s ongoing trials have sustained “clinically significant therapeutic benefit” from cannabis—including relief from pain, spastic-

ity, bladder-related symptoms and tremors, as well as a 50 percent average reduction in their use of opiates. Guy called the findings “very encouraging,” noting that many of those who attained relief suffer from “conditions previously considered intractable.”

Researcher William Notcutt, who is overseeing GW’s trials at James Paget Hospital, expressed similar enthusiasm. “The results have exceeded what I dared hope for,” he told the *Guardian*. “Eighty percent of patients [are achieving] good-quality benefit from the cannabis. For some we are getting almost total relief from pain, with pain scores going down to zero.”

GW is scheduled this fall to begin a series of large-scale Phase III trials in England and Canada on the efficacy of cannabinoids in the treatment of chronic pain. Although the company does not currently have trials pending in the US, a series of

California state-sponsored studies regarding the effectiveness of inhaled marijuana on multiple sclerosis and AIDS-related neuropathy are expected to begin shortly at the Center for Medical Cannabis Research at the University of California at San Diego. They will be the first state-sponsored cannabis research trials in America in almost two decades.

To learn more about UCSD’s Center for Medical Cannabis research, please visit: http://health.ucsd.edu/news/2000_08_29_CMCR.html. For a summary of GW’s past and pending clinical trials, log on to: http://www.gwpharm.com/rese_clin_summ.html. A summary report on Geoffrey Guy’s presentation to the AAPM is available online at: http://www.hightimes.com/News/2001_09/doc.html



GW Pharmaceuticals Chairman,
Geoffrey Guy

NORML Establishes First Ever Pro-Pot PAC

In an effort to strengthen our lobbying efforts, NORML recently created the first ever NORML PAC — a political action committee established to contribute funds to marijuana-law reform friendly candidates seeking local, state, and federal office. The NORML PAC is a voluntary, nonprofit unincorporated association. It is independent of and not affiliated with any political party or candidate.

NORML's Keith Stroup calls the formation of the NORML PAC "a reflection of the progress that is being made in the movement to decriminalize or legalize marijuana. We are seeing more and more candidates for elected office who are willing to challenge current marijuana policies,

and call for an end to marijuana prohibition and to the practice of arresting responsible marijuana smokers. NORML wants to be better able to help those candidates who support our position, and the creation of the NORML PAC provides us that option."

NORML anticipates making its first round of political contributions in the coming 2002 elections.

NORML members wishing to contribute to the NORML PAC should send their check to NORML PAC, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 710, Washington, DC 20036. Contributors of \$200 or more are required by law to provide their name, address, occupation and employer.

DEA Wages War on California's Medical Pot Clubs

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pensary. No criminal charges have been filed, but law enforcement seized over 900 of the cooperative's patient records, computers, bank records, grow equipment and medicine. According to California NORML Coordinator Dale Gieringer, the raid came without warning, as federal agents had not previously attempted to infiltrate the club, but based their actions instead on this past spring's US Supreme Court ruling denying any exception to the federal ban against the manufacture and distribution of medical marijuana.

The LACRC bust came on the heels of a previous federal raid on the offices of the California Medical Research Center in Cool, California, northeast of Sacramento. Agents in that raid seized 32 plants and approximately 5,000 medical records from club members, but declined (as of yet) to file any criminal charges against the center's proprietors. DEA agents also raided a medical marijuana farm outside of Los Angeles that grew cannabis for the LACRC.

In recent weeks, federal agents have been spotted staking out Bay Area medical cannabis clubs, raiding patient gardens, and encouraging local officials to circumvent California's medical marijuana law, Gieringer says.

State officials, including San Francisco District Attorney Terence Halinan, have denounced the government's strong-arm tactics. Peter Warren, a spokesman for the California Medical Association said: "Federal and law enforcement authorities have no business interfering with the doctor-patient relationship. It's especially shocking in this time of national crisis that federal agents are out there tossing doctor's offices."

Dale Gieringer echoes his sentiments, calling the DEA's actions a "disgraceful and shocking abuse of government power in flagrant disregard of public health, welfare and the interests of the community."

"These patient-support groups play a necessary and positive role in their communities, providing medicine to patients in a safe and secure environment," adds Armentano. "Without them, thousands of patients are otherwise forced to obtain their medication on the black market. At a time when law enforcement resources should clearly be focused on public safety, it is unconscionable that limited DEA and Justice Department resources are being spent to override state policy and target seriously ill patients and their providers in California. The American people know the difference between terrorism and marijuana smoking, and they no longer support wasting resources chasing marijuana smokers, whether medical or recreational users."

Zogby Poll: Majority of Americans Oppose US Marijuana Policies

Two-Thirds Oppose Feds' Closing of Medical Pot Clubs;

Three-Fifths Oppose Arresting Pot Smokers

Americans oppose federal efforts to close California medical marijuana providers, and reject the notion that recreational users of the drug should face arrest or criminal prosecution, according to a national Zogby poll of 1,024 likely voters commissioned by the NORML Foundation.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents oppose the use of federal law enforcement agencies to close dispensaries that supply medical marijuana to patients in California and other states that have legalized pot for medical use. Of those, a full one-half (50 percent) say they "strongly oppose," 17 percent say they "somewhat oppose" and six percent are undecided. Only 27 percent of those polled say they support the government's actions, and fewer than one in six (15 percent) voiced strong support.

In addition, 61 percent of respondents said that in light of the increased attention to the threat of terrorism since September 11, they oppose arresting and jailing nonviolent marijuana smokers. Of those, 39 percent "strongly oppose" arresting smokers, 22 percent "somewhat oppose" and six percent are undecided. Only 33 percent of those polled say they support arresting and jailing marijuana offenders, and fewer than one in five (18 percent) voiced strong support. The poll is the first to gauge the public's support for marijuana decriminalization since the September 11 tragedy.

Full survey results are available on NORML's website at : <http://www.norml.org/news/zogby.shtml>.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Fight for Medical Marijuana Opens New Front

As we enter the 2002 Congressional legislative session, NORML is pleased to announce two new conservative allies in the battle for medicinal pot: Texas Congressman Ron Paul and former Ronald Reagan political advisor and speechwriter Lyn Nofziger.

At first glance, the duo may appear unlikely proponents for the legalization of medical cannabis – after all, both are longtime, hardnosed conservatives. In reality, however, providing an effective medicine to those patients who need it is neither a Democrat nor Republican issue. It's a humanitarian one, and it's high time political conservatives answered the call.

Though Libertarian-leaning Congressman Paul is a longtime ideological opponent of the drug war, it was only recently that he teamed up with NORML ally Barney Frank (D-MA) to introduce House Bill 2592, the "State's Rights to Medical Marijuana Act." (The bill is a streamlined version of H.R. 1344.)

The Frank-Paul bill is the first bi-partisan medical pot legislation introduced in Congress

in more than a decade. Presently, 20 members of Congress are signed on to the bill, which awaits action from the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health. In December, Reps. Frank and Paul distributed a "Dear Colleague" letter to House Representatives criticizing the government's assault on California's medical marijuana community, and imploring Congress to respect the rights of states to enact their own medi-pot policies.

"Medicinal use of illegal drugs, in particular marijuana, has been prohibited and greater human suffering has resulted," Paul says. "Imprisoning a person who is dying from cancer and AIDS for using his own self-cultivated marijuana is absolutely bizarre and cruel."

GOP stalwart and self-described "right-wing Republican" Lyn Nofziger has a more personal connection to the medi-pot issue. Like many advocates, he witnessed pot's therapeutic powers up close when his daughter underwent chemotherapy for lymph cancer.

This past fall, Nofziger decided to assist NORML's campaign by going public with his pro-medical marijuana stance. At NORML's

request, Nofziger sent a personal letter to all Congressional Republicans urging their support of H.R. 2592. "The medical marijuana issue calls out for responsible, honest leadership at the federal level," Nofziger wrote. "We owe it to [seriously ill patients] to provide safe and controlled access to this drug."

NORML's Keith Stroup says that the addition of Nofziger and Paul greatly increases the chances that medical marijuana-law reform will receive a "fair shake" in this year's predominantly conservative Congress. "We believe that their influence can play a crucial role in convincing other high-profile Republicans to support medical marijuana," he says.

"Conditions like multiple sclerosis, cancer, glaucoma and chronic pain strike individuals regardless of political ideology. For too long, liberals and conservatives have mistakenly approached the legalization of medical marijuana as an 'us versus them' issue. It is not. Rather, it's a crusade that warrants the support of all caring individuals, and that within Congress must be waged on both sides of the aisle in order to ultimately be successful."

For more information or to register your support for the "State's Rights to Medical Marijuana Act," please visit: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=23972&type=CO>.

Great Britain Goes Decrim!

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of marijuana. A handful of Dutch-style "cannabis cafes" have also begun operating in various parts of the UK.

"The United States is quickly becoming isolated regarding the way in which we choose to target and vilify marijuana smokers," Stroup says. "American elected officials would be well advised to heed the lessons learned by their European counterparts, and recognize that a rational and just marijuana policy is one based upon decriminalizing responsible adult use."



Texas Congressman, Ron Paul (R)



Former Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger

NORML Releases Updated Listing of Health Organizations Supportive of Medical Marijuana

Medical marijuana opponents frequently argue that few or no health authorities recognize cannabis as a legitimate therapeutic agent. In recent months, DEA Director Asa Hutchinson has made this allegation the mantlepiece of his anti-pot rhetoric, stating repeatedly, "We have to listen to the scientific and medical community, and they're saying that marijuana has no legitimate medical purpose."

In response to this misinformation, NORML has compiled the most comprehensive list available of medical organizations supportive of the use of medical marijuana. It features referenced position statements from over 70 respected health organizations in favor of immediate patient access to medical marijuana, as well as several additional groups on record endorsing medical marijuana research. In the coming months, NORML will be making this list and other materials available to state and federal legislators.

"As the 2002 state and federal legislative session heats up, it is vital that politicians are aware of the science supporting marijuana's medical value," says NORML Publications Director Paul Armentano. "What better endorsement of the therapeutic power of medical cannabis than the resounding voices of the medical and health community themselves?"

The full text of NORML's updated report is available online at: <http://www.norml.org/medical/mjorgs.shtml>.

Health Organizations in Favor of Immediate Legal Access to Medical Marijuana

(Text of resolutions is available on NORML's website)

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Addiction Treatment Alternatives | British Medical Association | National Association of People with AIDS |
| AIDS Action Council | California Academy of Family Physicians | National Association for Public Health Policy |
| AIDS Foundation of Chicago | California Legislative Council for Older Americans | National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Transgender Association |
| AIDS National Interfaith Network (Washington, DC) | California Nurses Association | National Native American AIDS Prevention Center |
| AIDS Project Arizona | California Pharmacists Association | National Nurses Society on Addictions |
| AIDS Project Los Angeles | Center for AIDS Services (Oakland, CA) | National Women's Health Network |
| AIDS Treatment Initiatives (Atlanta, GA) | Colorado AIDS Project | Nebraska AIDS Project |
| AIDS Treatment News | Colorado Nurses Association | New England Journal of Medicine |
| Alaska Nurses Association | Dr. Dean Edell (surgeon and nationally syndicated radio host) | New Mexico Nurses Association |
| American Academy of Family Physicians | Embrace Life (Santa Cruz, CA) | New South Wales (Australia) Parliamentary Working Party on the Use of Cannabis for Medical Purposes |
| American Medical Student Association | Florida Governor's Red Ribbon Panel on AIDS | New York City AIDS Housing Network |
| American Preventive Medical Association | Florida Medical Association | New York State Nurses Association |
| American Public Health Association | French Ministry of Health | North Carolina Nurses Association |
| American Society of Addiction Medicine | Gay and Lesbian Medical Association | Northwest AIDS Foundation |
| Arthritis Research Campaign (United Kingdom) | Hawaii Nurses Association | Ohio Patient Network |
| Australian Medical Association (New South Wales) Limited | Health Canada | Okaloosa AIDS Support and Information Services (Fort Walton, FL) |
| Australian National Task Force on Cannabis | Health Force: Women and Men Against AIDS (New York, NY) | People of Color Against AIDS Network (Seattle, WA) |
| Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights (San Francisco, CA) | Hepatitis C Action and Advisory Coalition | Physicians for Social Responsibility - Oregon |
| Being Alive: People With HIV/AIDS Action Committee (San Diego, CA) | Kaiser Permanente | San Francisco AIDS Foundation |
| Boulder County AIDS Project (Boulder, CO) | Latino Commission on AIDS | San Francisco Mayor's Summit on AIDS and HIV |
| British House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology | Life Extension Foundation | San Francisco Medical Society |
| British House of Lords Select Committee On Science and Technology (Second Report) | Lymphoma Foundation of America | Dr. Andrew Weil (nationally recognized professor of internal medicine and founder of the National Integrative Medicine Council) |
| | Maine AIDS Alliance | Whitman-Walker Clinic (Washington, DC) |
| | Minnesota Nurses Association | Wisconsin Nurses Association |
| | Mobilization Against AIDS (San Francisco, CA) | |
| | Mothers Voices to End AIDS (New York, NY) | |
| | Mississippi Nurses Association | |
| | National Academy of Sciences Institute Of Medicine (IOM) | |

Think Again! Marijuana and Cognition Studies Shelve “Stoner” Stereotype

Add “stoner stupid” to the ever-growing list of marijuana myths. Findings published in November’s *Journal of Neuropsychopharmacology* reveal that pot smoking has virtually no effect on cognitive performance in experienced users.

A research team from Columbia and Cornell Universities studied the performance of eighteen volunteers on a battery of computerized cognitive tasks in various domains, including reaction time, attention, memory, visuospatial processing, reasoning, flexibility and mental calculation. Subjects were asked to first complete the tests sober and then run through a series of similar tests 20 minutes after smoking marijuana. Although marijuana inhalation significantly increased the number of premature responses and the time participants required to complete several cognitive tasks, scientists concluded that “[subjects’]

accuracy ... mental calculation and reasoning ... on these and other cognitive tasks were unaltered after marijuana administration.”

Previous analyses of the *long-term* influence of marijuana on cognition paint an equally optimistic picture. In October, researchers at Harvard University reported that regular marijuana smokers who abstain from herb for one week or more performed no differently on cognition tests than non-tokers. According to their findings, published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, a cohort comprised of chronic daily smokers “showed virtually no significant differences from control subjects (those who had smoked marijuana less than 50 times in their lives) on a battery of 10 neuropsychological tests.”

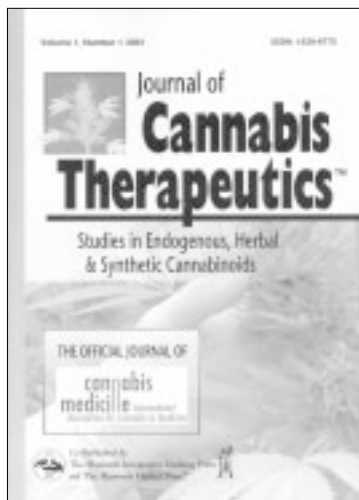
Authors added: “Former heavy users, who had consumed little or no cannabis in the three months before testing, [also] showed no significant differences from control subjects on

any of these tests on any of the testing days. ... In summary, our findings do not support the hypothesis that long-term heavy cannabis use causes irreversible cognitive deficits.”

A groundbreaking 1999 John Hopkins University study similarly derides the “stoner stupid” mythology. More than 1,300 volunteers participated in the Baltimore study – the first to investigate weed’s long-term cognitive effects in a large epidemiological sample. Scientists administered subjects specialized tests, called Mini-Mental State Examinations (MMSE), in 1981 and 1982, and then measured their performance on follow up tests some 12 to 15 years later. In all, researchers found “no significant differences in cognitive decline between heavy users, light users, and nonusers of cannabis” – a conclusion that most experienced marijuana consumers have known all along.

But don’t throw away the term “stoner stupid” just yet. After all, how better to describe those in Congress who continue to endorse the criminal prohibition of marijuana. Stoner stupid indeed!

Attention NORML members!



Complimentary Edition of the Journal of Cannabis Therapeutics

For a limited time, the *Journal of Cannabis Therapeutics* will provide a free sample issue to NORML members upon request. This is an excellent opportunity for marijuana activists to check out a complimentary copy of the world’s only academic scientific journal devoted to the study of clinical cannabis, endocannabinoids and synthetic cannabinoids.

Interested parties should send their requests to:

Journal of Cannabis Therapeutics
Journal Sample Copy Department
The Haworth Press, Inc.
10 Alice Street
Binghamton, NY 13904

International Treaties and Pot Prohibition: Slaying the Paper Tiger

Of the many fallacies surrounding pot prohibition, one that often goes least challenged is the claim that international treaty obligations forbid the US government from relaxing America's marijuana laws. However, like the bulk of prohibitionists' propaganda, this charge fails to hold up under scrutiny.

The United States is a signatory to three global drug control treaties: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 United Nations Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Historically, drug warriors have argued that these treaty obligations require us to uphold a national policy of criminal pot prohibition. Nevertheless, many drug policy experts maintain a different position: that international treaties, in fact, *do not* prohibit countries from relaxing legal restrictions on the personal use or cultivation of marijuana.

Last summer, a legal study by the British DrugScope think-tank concluded that governments have "considerable room for maneuver under the terms of the three drug control Conventions." Perhaps most significantly, researchers argued that the treaties allow governments to substitute measures such as "education, rehabilitation and social reintegration ... for conviction and penal sanction" in drug cases. The study noted that several European nations, including Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, have replaced criminal penalties for minor drug crimes with "administrative sanctions" without running afoul of U.N. treaties. They further speculated that additional nations could legally enact similar laws by either calling on "constitutional principles, principles of proportionality or public interest criteria with regard to use or possession offenses which are considered mi-

nor in nature, [or by invoking their] right ... to apply alternatives to punishment for offenses which have been established as punishable."

While the DrugScope report is the latest research body to draw such conclusions, it is hardly the first. In fact, even the prohibitionist International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) admits, "None of the conventions require a party to convict or punish drug abusers who commit ... offenses ... [that] have been established as punishable."

The study noted that several EU nations, including Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, have replaced criminal penalties for minor drug crimes with "administrative sanctions" without running afoul of U.N. treaties.

Specific to pot, several advisory panels have concluded that nations may institute systems of decriminalization or partial prohibition without conflicting with international conventions. As early as 1972, the US-led "Shafer Commission" determined that the term "possession" in Article 36 of the Single Convention "refers not to possession for personal use, but to possession as a link to illicit trafficking." The commission went on to recommend a national policy decriminalizing the use, possession and non-profit transaction of the herb.

One year later, the U.N.'s official "Commentary on the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs" confirmed their interpretation, stating that whether or not pot possession for per-

sonal use requires the imposition of penal sanctions "is a question which may be answered differently in different countries."

A 1979 Canadian government report also reached this conclusion. Its authors found that international treaties granted governments "considerable constructive latitude" in dealing with cannabis offenses. They concluded, "Even if Canada should elect to continue criminalizing consumption-oriented conduct, it is not required to convict or punish persons who have committed these offenses."

A 1997 discussion paper by the New Zealand Drug Policy Forum Trust went even further. Its authors declared that a policy of "partial prohibition" – defined as "permit[ing] adults to possess up to a defined amount of cannabis and cultivate up to a certain number of plants" – is also likely in compliance with international conventions. While the researchers did acknowledge that the 1961 treaty probably prohibits government regulation of marijuana commerce, they added that any nation wishing to enact such a system may "simultaneously 'denounce' the Single Convention, as permitted under Article 46, while re-ratifying with

reservations concerning cannabis in accordance with Article 49," which allows signatories the "right to permit temporarily in any one of its territories ... the use of cannabis, cannabis resin, extracts and tinctures of cannabis for non-medical purposes" under limited circumstances.

In sum, although the US' treaty obligations are often regarded as an impediment to marijuana-law reform, the truth is that our nation possesses wide-ranging flexibility regarding its pot policies despite international commitments. In reality, international treaties are little more than a paper tiger, and it remains the prohibitionists themselves that still pose the greatest barrier to pot reform.

Clinton Legacy Is One for the Ages

Clinton's parting shot to the marijuana community – much like his eight-year presidency – is one for the record books. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's *Year 2000 Uniform Crime Report*, police arrested an estimated 734,498 persons for pot violations in 2000 – the final year of the Clinton regime. The total is the highest ever recorded by the FBI, and comprises just under half of *all* drug arrests recorded so far this millennium.

As had been the case throughout the 1990s, the overwhelming majority of those charged with marijuana violations in 2000 – some 646,042 Americans (or 88 percent) – were charged with possession only. The remaining 88,456 individuals were charged with “sale/manufacture,” a category that includes all cultivation offenses – even those where the marijuana was being grown for personal or medical use. Taken together, the total number of marijuana arrests for 2000 far exceeded the combined number of arrests for all known violent crimes, including murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault.

As disturbing as the year 2000 numbers are, they only represent the tip of the Clinton

administration iceberg. More than 4.9 million Americans were busted for weed under Clinton's watch, a greater number than the combined populations of Alaska, Delaware, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, DC and Wyoming. Moreover, pot arrests rose under Clinton every year but one, and increased nearly 100 percent between the first and last years of the Clinton presidency. In fact, no presidential administration, not even Richard Nixon's or Ronald Reagan's, oversaw the arrests of more marijuana smokers than William Jefferson Clinton's.

Ironically, the same man who presided over this nation's most notorious pot crackdown is also the first president since Jimmy Carter to publicly proclaim that herb should be decriminalized. Unlike Carter however, who asserted his support in a prominent August 2, 1977 address to Congress, Clinton waited until the end of his Presidency to finally denounce pot prohibition in a December 2000 interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine.

“I think that most small amounts of marijuana have been decriminalized in some places, and should be,” the former Prez told magazine founder Yann Wenner when asked

if he thought that “people should go to jail for using or even selling small amounts of marijuana.” Clinton also told Wenner that he strongly disagreed with recently enacted provisions of the Higher Education Act barring college loans to convicted pot offenders – a provision Bill himself signed into law in 1998! Better late than never? Try telling that to the millions of pot smokers arrested under Clinton's watch and the tens of thousands of students denied federal aid.

Clinton's lack of political courage while in office is even more frustrating in light of recent polling data showing that a majority of the American public now favors ending marijuana prohibition. According to a recent national poll by Zogby International, 61 percent of Americans say they oppose arresting and jailing nonviolent marijuana smokers. (See page 3 story.) Taking these numbers at face value, it's apparent that the public is ready and waiting for a president willing to reshape America's antiquated pot policies. Bill Clinton had the opportunity to be that man. Instead, he will forever be known as the president who refused to inhale, and as the ambivalent overseer of the greatest marijuana crackdown in modern history. It's a legacy Clinton himself may hope to forget, but one that the victims of his political cowardice will unfortunately always remember.

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Please call 888-218-0808 to make hotel reservations, and call early to assure you receive a discounted rate.

APRIL 18-20, 2002

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