

Decriminalization of marijuana



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Marijuana is one of the most widespread illegal drugs in the United States today. It comes from the plant *Cannabis sativa*. Marijuana is usually smoked in a cigar, in a pipe or blunts. It is often smoked in combination with another drug. Marijuana may also be mixed in food and other beverages and it can be in the form of hashish. The THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is the main chemical that can be found in marijuana releases cellular reactions that makes the users to be high in experience

During the ancient times, marijuana has been used for achieving exhilaration. It was also used as a medicine in China and been listed in medical compendium of Chinese medicine from 2737 B. C. Marijuana's uses spread from China, India and North Africa. Then it reached Europe at least as early as A. D. 500. Several studies proved that marijuana has bad effect on health specifically on brain, heart, lungs as well as on social behavior.

Over usage of marijuana causes several problems on brain, specifically memory and learning problems, distorted perception, and difficulty thinking and solving problems. Abusers of marijuana have a high risk of having heart attack and may have problems in breathing because marijuana reduces oxygen-carrying capacity of blood. Marijuana induces cancer of the lungs as well as to other part of the body especially in respiratory system.

Marijuana can also cause depression, anxiety and personality disturbances and may burn the mouth and throat due to heavy cough. For the past years, there has been on-going debate about the decriminalization of marijuana in Canada. Many opposes to it because when marijuana is legalized, drug use would increase. But the supporters of the legalization of marijuana say that marijuana should be treated more like of tobacco and alcohol.

Marijuana was banned from Canada a long time ago because of the Opium and Drug Act but in 2002, two committees of parliament namely the Special Senate Committee on Illegal Drugs and the House of Commons Special Committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs recommended the decriminalization of possession of small amount of marijuana for they claim that marijuana is not a get away drug not like the harder drugs. The Health Canada implemented the regulation for accessing marijuana for medical purposes. Many commentators suggest that decriminalizing marijuana in Canada is a relatively uncontroversial move, given the drug's wide social acceptance.

Even if many Canadians are using marijuana, there still had been series of arguments decriminalization marijuana. For the supporters of the decriminalization, marijuana use in Canada is already a norm because many people living Canada are using marijuana. They are also claiming that marijuana is used in medicine. They say marijuana prevents vomiting and it is an appetite stimulant especially when used as treatment for AIDS. It is also used to prevent spasmodic episodes and is an anti-convulsant. It is also a pain reliever and analgesic.

It is also useful in treating glaucoma. They say that the issue on decriminalization should not be a criminal issue but a social and public issue since they say that marijuana is less harmful than alcohol. Also, the supporters of the decriminalization were saying that most of the people caught having marijuana were not put into jail but only receive criminal record. They say that the people with the possession of marijuana should not

be given a criminal record because of employment difficulties and problems they might encounter when traveling internationally.

When several surveys conducted in Canada, most of the people who participated were saying that it really doesn't matter to them when someone uses marijuana just for pleasure as long as that person knew what he is doing and what will be the consequences of what he is doing. Some say that it is the government has reasons on pursuing the decriminalization of marijuana. Much Canadian support the legalization of marijuana for medical use but according to them there should be a clear understanding that the distribution of marijuana should be in health establishments.

Also, the dosage that a person will take must be of the level of the pain. But for those who oppose the decriminalization were arguing that is a get away drug. They say that marijuana is a stepping stone to trying of harder drug like heroin. Also they were arguing that if marijuana will be legalized, drug use will be increased. For some, if the marijuana will be decriminalized, the much concern is how marijuana would be readily available in school. Some are scared that the selling of marijuana would happen in school and the children might get hooked to it at early age.

Also, the United States drug enforcement officials were concern that marijuana laws in Canada would increase the marijuana flow in the country as well as marijuana flow in US. Marijuana has numbers of negative effects such as respiratory damage and induces psychiatric effects. The call for the decriminalization of marijuana has become a massive issue all over Canada. The issue went far beyond whether marijuana is good or bad. The issue now here is giving the authority a chance to break syndicates selling illegal drugs.

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But there is much concern that it might be ineffective and may lead to social arguments that may cause social change. Also, many critiques of decriminalization view it as the same as the legalization of the same-sex marriage. The issue might lead to change in traditional values in Canada. And many fear that there would be a widespread drug abuse problem all over the country. And if the marijuana will be legalized, it might have a huge impact on the Canadian society. Decriminalization of marijuana is certainly a big issue that has to be resolved.

Regulation of this issue opposes the Canadian constitution particularly the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act saying that no person shall seek or obtain a substance included in Schedule I, II, III, IV or an authorization to obtain a substance included in Schedule I, II, III, IV from a practitioner, unless the person discloses to the practitioner particulars relating to the acquisition by the person of every substance in those Schedules, and of every authorization to obtain such substances, from any other practitioner within the preceding thirty days is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years or is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction and liable for a first offence, to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or to both, and for a subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or to both.

The decriminalization of marijuana in Canada in my opinion is not appropriate because doing so may affect the whole society in viewing illegal drug. That is why I am one of those opposing the decriminalization of it. This

might affect the values in Canada because enforcement of legalization of marijuana is like legalizing as well other illegal drugs.

Decriminalization of marijuana might be a cause of a widespread abuse of marijuana since jail sentence and criminal records of having been caught in the possession of marijuana would be replaced with fines. Some people might abuse the taking of marijuana since there is no harsh punishment. Even if many claim that marijuana is used for medical purposes, you cannot still be assured whether they will use it to cure illness or just to use it for pleasure. Over usage of marijuana might lead into something very dangerous it contains chemical that might damage our brain, lungs, heart and even change our own social being. Indeed marijuana can be an effective medicine but it contains hundreds of chemicals that some are dangerous to health. It can be harmful in a hundred of different ways. It can be on immediate or over the time effects.

Marijuana is addicting because it causes compulsive, uncontrollable drug craving, seeking, and use, even in the face of negative health and social consequences. It also causes physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms. Since marijuana is considered a get away drug, the legalization of it might be a way of legalizing other dangerous drugs. Even if they say that the Canadian government may save lots of money by legalizing marijuana still there would be other governmental costs with the control of marijuana. That is why is decriminalizing marijuana is such a big issue that is needed to resolved immediately.