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fact, in 1900, there



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The question of whether to legalize drugs or not is a very controversial and important issue.

Drugs affect so many areas of society. "The U. S. population has an extremely high rate of alcohol and drug abuse" (Grolier). Several groups have formed and spoken out regarding their position." Speaking Out Against Drug Legalization is the first step in helping to deliver the credible, consistent message about the risks and costs of the legalization of drugs to people in terms that make sense to them.

The anti-legalization message is effective when communicated by representatives of the Federal Government, but takes on even more credibility when it comes from those in the community who can put the legalization debate in local perspective" (Internet). After learning about the issues regarding both sides of the argument, I would choose to support those who oppose legalization of any drugs. Drugs simply create problems which affect society in several ways. The government has made several efforts to control drugs and their users, however, to most the problem appears too out of hand.

"Others see potential profit in legalizing drugs and still others simply believe that individual rights to take drugs should be protected. The group also acknowledged that the legalization concept appeals to people who are looking for simple solutions to the devastating problem of drug abuse" (Internet). Society's answer to the problem is to trick the drug user by giving him what he wants. People believe that making drugs legal will take away the temptation to use them.

This idea is wrong and far from logical. If drugs are legalized then they will be more accessible to the young, addicted, and ignorant. " As a result the ready availability of addicting drugs, and as a result of their heavy use for medical problems, many individuals became addicted to the narcotics contained in these potent medicines. In fact, in 1900, there were more narcotics addicts, proportionate to the population, than there are today. At that time, most of the users who became addicts were medical addicts. Very few abusers took drugs for " recreational " purposes. In 1914, in an effort to curb the indiscriminate use of narcotics, the federal government passed the Harrison Act, making it illegal to obtain a narcotic drug without a prescription. During the 1920's the Supreme Court ruled that maintaining addicts on narcotic drugs, even by prescription, was in violation of the Harrison Act.

Some 30, 000 physicians were arrested during this period for dispensing narcotics, and some 3, 000 actually served prison sentences. Consequently, doctors all but abandoned the treatment of addicts for nearly half a century in the United States" (Grolier). The only resulting effect will be a negative one. There are no positive aspects of putting drugs on the streets with a label reading " legal." There are plenty of people in society that find enough trouble on their own without the help of their country. Legalizing drugs would have a devastating result that would affect society as a whole. " Audiences need to understand that 70% of drug users are employed, and that the school bus driver who drives your children to school could smoke marijuana, that the surgeon who operates on you may have cocaine in his system, and that the driver in back of you may be on speed. The debate needs to demonstrate

graphically how the common man will be impacted by drug legalization” (Internet).

There is an idea that the “ drug user” is a low class, unemployed junkie. This is untrue. The drug user is often a white collared worker with a family and a future. They are not all dirty with missing teeth and poor grammar. The common misconceptions of the “ user” are dangerous to those members of society trying to rid the world of the problem. “ Drinking on the job is a social and economic problem with a long history. With the growing popularity of illegal drugs in the 1960’s and 1970’s, it was to be expected that their use in the workplace would emerge as a major issue by the 1980’s.

Estimates of employee drug use vary greatly, ranging from 10 percent to 25 percent for the proportion of workers who use drugs occasionally on the job. The safe performance of some occupations - among them, airline pilot, air traffic controller, truck driver, and physician - can be compromised by drug use” (Grolier). One of the greatest concerns of drugs is their contribution to the crime rate. Crime will always be a problem as long as drugs exist and are abused.

“ One category of crime is the victimless