Brian Petersen

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Legalize It – Argumentative Paper Outline

The legal status of marijuana has been a popular, controversial issue in the United States since its federal banishment in 1937. Since its banishment, people wanting to obtain marijuana have had to get it through crime organizations creating an unsafe society. If the federal government were to legalize marijuana they would be able to become the only legal source to obtain marijuana. If they were to become the only legal source, they would be able to regulate the marijuana market. By the methods that the government uses to regulate the marijuana market, they would be free to use the resources gained to create a safer society for the general public.

The United States government would be able to regulate the distribution and accessibility of marijuana if they were to legalize the usage of it. The government would be able to do this because they would become the main provider of marijuana to the general public and would be able to control a majority of the marijuana market. Once they become the main provider, as part of the new regulations, the government could impose a marijuana tax to the purchase of this drug. The government would have a significant increase in revenue, by the imposed marijuana tax, thus being a resource which was obtained by regulating marijuana. The government would then be able to use this revenue to help them in the effort of eliminating the ability to obtain marijuana illegally. With the elimination of the smaller marijuana markets, the general society would become safer place for the citizens.

As of now, the only method available to obtain marijuana is to get it through organized crime groups or home growers. Since these are the only way to obtain this drug, the criminal groups are the monopoly in the marijuana market. These groups of people are often unregulated and present a dangerous environment for the general public. If the government were to become the legal source of marijuana accessibility and distribution, a majority of the current citizens who obtain the drugs through illegal mediums would begin to get their drugs through the government rather than the organized crime groups. They would do so because they do not want to put themselves in any unnecessary illegal situations than necessary and because of the hazardous conditions what are present while obtaining drugs illegally. A majority of the marijuana users will begin to buy through the government thus significantly decreasing the drug dealers profit; with this change, the drug dealers would be forced to stop selling marijuana because it would no longer be a profitable source of income. And with the decrease of the drug dealers, the only place to buy marijuana would be through the government regulated entities. Consequently, the organized crime groups would leave the black market which would lower the crime rates in the public thus making the general society safer.

Combining these two resources gained, which were achieved by regulating marijuana, a much safer society is created. The government would become the monopoly in the marijuana market and the marijuana tax work cohesively to increase the resources gained. By redirecting all marijuana consumers to buy through the government would force them to pay the marijuana tax thus giving the government more resources to use. This all came from the government legalizing marijuana usage and by becoming the source of marijuana.

Through a marijuana tax, becoming the monopoly provider for the marijuana market, and using the resources gained from these the two previous methods, the government would be able to create a safer society by eliminating the distribution of marijuana by people who present a dangerous threat for the United States citizens.

Further Outline:

* Introduction
  + Thesis: Although many politicians and citizens claim that cannabis (marijuana) should remain as an illicit drug, marijuana should be legalized because it is not a gateway drug, it is not as addictive as many currently legal substances, and the many claimed long term effects of marijuana are not true.
* Qualification – claims for opposing side
  + Long term effects
    - Mental disorder development
      * Psychosis, schizophrenia, depression
    - Brain damage
      * Cognition decrease
      * Physical deformities
  + Gateway drug theory
    - Marijuana use makes people more likely to use harder drugs (cocaine, heroin)
    - Claim that those using the drug are more likely to be put in situations where offered the harder drugs
      * Higher availability
    - Claim a cause-and-effect relationship
* Rational – claims and refutes
  + Addiction
    - Found not to be as addictive as many other substances
      * Nicotine highest, cannabis lowest behind caffeine
      * Tested: cannabis, caffeine, cocaine, alcohol, heroin and nicotine
    - Type
      * Psychological, not physical
        + Just like gambling, pleasure, eating, etc.
      * Not physical
        + No changes happen, it’s only the short high that is addictive and desired
  + Gateway drug
    - Illegal use of marijuana does put one into the situations that allows them to more easily obtain harder drugs
      * Higher availability
    - But marijuana usage does not necessarily lead to harder drugs
    - If legalized, these situations of being introduced to harder drugs will decrease, user of harder drugs also decrease
  + Long term effects
    - Mental disorders
      * Does not cause psychosis or depression
      * Cannabis rates have risen since 1960s, but psychosis nor depression have
        + Would have risen if effect was true
    - Brain damage
      * No permanent like other legal substances
        + Alcohol
  + Health benefits
    - Proven and shown
    - Reduce vomit and nausea
    - Pain reliever

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