**CP - Legalization**

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# \*\*ORGANIZED\*\*

## SHELL

#### A is the text: The US will legalize use of cocaine, heroin, marijuana at the federal, state, and local levels. I reserve the right to clarify.

#### Solvency:

#### Legalizing is best way to reducing the deaths from drug use and it saves about $75 billion a year.

Ostrowski [James Ostrowski. Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 121: Thinking about Drug Legalization. CATO. Policy Analysis. May 25, 1989. <http://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa121.pdf>.] AJ

As a general rule, legal drug use is less dangerous than illegal drug use and is influenced by the mores of society. Legal drug use involves non-lethal doses, non-poisoned drugs, clean needles, and warning labels. The night basketball star Len Bias died from a cocaine overdose, his friends, fearing the police, waited until after his third seizure before calling an ambulance. Illegal drug users have been arrested at hospitals after seeking medical attention. Legalization would put an end to this kind of nonsense. Users would be free to seek medical attention or counseling, if needed, and would not be alienated from family and friends as many are now. For a drug user to kill himself with drugs under these conditions would be tantamount to suicide.¶ A given amount of legal drug use would cause much less death and illness than the same amount of illegal drug use. A realistic estimate is that illegal drug use is five times more dangerous than legal use, (see appendix, "Acute Effects"). Thus, even a highly unlikely five fold increase in drug use under legalization would not increase the current number of¶ drug overdose deaths. The yearly number of heroin and cocaine deaths combined is about 3,000 per year.[73] Eighty percent ,or 2,400, are caused by black market factors (see appendix,"Acute Effects"); 20 percent, or 600, are caused by the intrinsic effects of the drugs. If, under legalization, legal use remained at the same level as current illegal use, there would be only 600 deaths each year. Only a 500 percent increase in use would match the current black market death toll. (Note that historians' estimates of the increase in alcohol use in the decades after the repeal of Prohibition range from zero to a maximum of 250 percent.[74])¶ Furthermore, it would take a 1,275 percent increase in legal drug use to produce as many deaths as drug prohibition-- through murder, AIDS, and poisoned drugs is already causing. Prohibition now causes 8,250 deaths, while 600 are the result of the drugs themselves. Thus, in order for legalized drug use to match the overall death toll of prohibition, use would have to increase more than 13-fold. ¶ There are now about 5 million regular cocaine users and 500,000 regular heroin users. To prove that prohibition saves more lives than it destroys, one would have to show that legalization would result in more than 6.5 million additional heroin users and more than 65 million additional cocaine users. Such enormous [but] increases are inconceivable at a time when the overall trend is toward less legal and illegal drug use.¶ The economic effects of drug use are subject to the same analysis. Since the economic cost of prohibition is $80 billion and the economic cost of drug use per se is about $5 billion, legalization of drugs could have a negative economic impact only if it led to a 1,500 percent increase in drug use.

## ADV – DRUG SWITCHING

#### Drug switching means even if drug use skyrockets there is still a decline in overall deaths.

Ostrowski [James Ostrowski. Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 121: Thinking about Drug Legalization. CATO. Policy Analysis. May 25, 1989. <http://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa121.pdf>.] AJ

Any increase in the use of newly legalized drugs is likely to involve some drug switching by smokers and drinkers. Since the death rate for these activities is greater than the death rate from heroin, cocaine, and marijuana (see appendix, "The Numbers"), any deaths avoided by switching would have to be [weighed] subtracted from the deaths caused by the legal use of heroin and cocaine. (The marijuana death rate is apparently zero.) Depending on the rate of switching, it is possible that the increased use of these drugs could actually reduce the total number of drug deaths.¶ For example, assume that legalization led to 10 million new cocaine users, which, all else equal, could cause an additional 400 deaths per year. However, assume also that a mere 5 percent of [whom] these users switched to cocaine from tobacco (tobacco and cocaine both stimulate the central nervous system). Tobacco-related deaths would eventually decrease by about 3,250 per year, and the result would be a net gain in lives saved of 2,850.[75]¶ Drug switching is a critical issue that any regime of drug control must face. What is the point of attempting to limit access to certain drugs, when the user merely turns to other, more dangerous drugs? For example, opium use in China may or may not have been vastly reduced, but "weak tranquilizers and sedative pills have been widely used in China, and they are easily available on the market."[76] Furthermore, two-thirds of all Chinese men now smoke cigarettes.[77]¶ Examples of drug switching abound. When narcotics were first outlawed, many middle-class users switched to "barbiturates . . . and later, to sedatives and tranquilizers. . .The laws did nothing to terminate this group of addicts. .They simply changed the drug to which the users were addicted."[78] Marijuana smoking first became popular as a replacement for alcohol during Prohibition. Similarly, it is common for alcoholics trying to stay sober to take up tobacco smoking instead. Recently, it has been reported that some intravenous heroin users have switched to smoking crack to avoid the risk of AIDS.

## US MARKET KEY TO CARTELS

#### The US market is the key factor in Mexican cartels – CP solvency also solves the Mexico scenario.

Kleiman [Mark Kleiman. Surgical Strikes in the Drug Wars. Foreign Affairs, Vol 90 No. 5. September/October 2011. <http://www.seguridadcondemocracia.org/administrador_de_carpetas/OCO-IM/pdf/Kleiman-SurgicalStrikesDrugWarsFA.pdf>] AJ

This line of reasoning seems to support the reply U.S. o⁄cials often hear when they demand that Mexico strengthen its antidrug eªorts: that the basic problem is not supply from Mexico but demand from the United States, and that it is incumbent on the United States to reduce the quantities of illicit drugs its residents sell, buy, and consume. But that goal, too, runs directly into some intractable facts. A small minority of drug users in the United States account for about 80 percent of hard-drug (that is, non-cannabis) consumption and an even larger share of the associated costs of drug abuse, including crime. Among heavy users of hard drugs, about 75 percent have at least one felony arrest in the course of a typical year. Hard drugs account for about 80 percent of the revenue of Mexican drug-trafficking organizations. All this means that reducing the demand for cannabis or the demand for cocaine among casual cocaine users cannot reduce the northbound ﬂow of drugs or the southbound ﬂow of drug money. Shrinking the market would require reducing the hard-drug use of about three million people in the United States who are both heavy users of expensive illicit drugs and also active lawbreakers.

## A2 USE WILL RISE

#### Drug use has been declining despite the de-facto legal status of several drugs – legalization won’t have a significant effect.

Kleiman [Mark Kleiman. Surgical Strikes in the Drug Wars. Foreign Affairs, Vol 90 No. 5. September/October 2011. <http://www.seguridadcondemocracia.org/administrador_de_carpetas/OCO-IM/pdf/Kleiman-SurgicalStrikesDrugWarsFA.pdf>] AJ

Long-term trends in legal drug use suggest that there would be no substantial increase in drug use under decriminalization. As a society, we are gradually moving away from the harmful use of alcohol and tobacco:¶ In 1956, 42 percent of adults smoked; in 1980 only 33 percent. In 1977, 29 percent of high school seniors smoked; in 1981, 20 percent. . . . We did not declare a war on tobacco. We did not make it illegal. . . . We did seek to convince our citizens not to smoke through persuasion, objective information, and education.[79]¶ Alcohol consumption and deaths caused by alcohol have [has] also been gradually declining as people switch from hard liquor to less potent formulations.[80] Finally, use of marijuana--now a de facto legal drug in many states--declined 11 percent from 1982 to 1985, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).¶ As our society grows increasingly health- and fitness conscious, heavy drug use loses its appeal. Many people are trading the tavern for the health club and choosing vitamins instead of martinis. The values of health and moderation clearly have less influence on the illegal drug scene, where hard-core drug users form subcultures that reinforce heavy, reckless drug use.¶ It is a mistake to assume that the mere availability of a drug leads to drug use or abuse:¶ For most of human history, even under conditions of ready access to the most potent of drugs, people and societies have regulated their drug use without requiring massive education, legal, and interdiction campaigns.[81]¶ Before drug prohibition, in both America and England, narcotics use peaked and then declined long before national prohibition was adopted.[82] Today, in spite of the availability of alcohol, problem drinkers are considered to compose only about 10 percent of the population.[83] In spite of the fact that marijuana can be purchased on virtually any street corner in some cities, only about 10 percent of the population has done so in the last month, according to NIDA. Significantly, the figures for cocaine are quite similar, in spite of the drug's reputation for addictiveness. About 20 million have tried the drug, but only 25 percent of that number have used it in the last month and only about 10 percent are considered addicts.[84] It bears remembering that for cocaine, the sample population is drawn from that segment of the population already interested enough in drugs to break the law to obtain them. Thus, an even lower percentage of repeat users could be expected from the overall population under legalization. These numbers support Stanton Peele's belief that "cocaine use is now described [incorrectly] as presenting the same kind of lurid monomania that pharmacologists once claimed only heroin could produce."[85]¶