



## Ending pot prohibition

Washington has just begun to smolder and smoke over the latest recommendations of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. That committee has unanimously recommended that all criminal penalties be eliminated for the private use and possession of grass.

The latest national survey among college-age persons indicates that over 50 per cent of all college students have used regularly or irregularly the drug known as "cannabis sativa" in one form or another.

The commission report will be presented to President Nixon and Congress on March 22. The report specifically calls for the "decriminalization" of the drug. The term "decriminalization" is used to describe the deletion of all criminal statutes

penalizing users and possessors of pot. This conclusion was drawn after the commission had listened to testimony at ten hearings and studied fifty commissioned reports.

The depth of the study is to be commended, as the entire investigation took one year to complete, and all avenues of controversy were explored.

One of the studies commissioned by the committee concluded that about 24 million Americans have used marijuana. In the committee's view, an extreme similarity exists now between the illegal use of pot today and the unlawful activities of Americans just before the end of prohibition of alcohol, when literally all of the United States citizenry was drinking illegally.

The report has some drawbacks, however, since it still calls for penalties for the simple sale of the drug, even among friends. It also does not favor legal harvesting of the cannabis plant, nor does it advocate the legalization of transporting it, or public indulgence in the use of the drug.

The substance of the recommendation legalizing the use of the drug calls for lawful use only within the privacy of the home. This has serious drawbacks, since marijuana is most frequently used socially rather than in individual privacy. Marijuana should be considered by authorities and the public as an alternative to alcohol or any other social agent seen within any social group. Since no correlation between use of pot and progression to harder drugs was found, this presents no problem of socially irredeemable value.

Rumors persist that the members of the commission that currently are in minority will be presenting a dissenting opinion favoring legalization and decriminalization of the drug, but this remains yet to be seen.

The report comes to Washington at a time when the President of the United States only a short time ago stated that he was completely opposed to any sort of legalization of marijuana. Political ramifications of any decision made by the executive branch different than the President's last statement of marijuana use will be apparent.

Since then the 18-year-old vote has become a significant factor in any political decision made. Since most users are in this age category, maybe, just maybe the Nixon administration will respond to this age group's requests.

Although a complete legalization of marijuana, with restrictions placed upon its use and distribution comparable to those laws now governing alcohol, is the best final solution, it is most desirable that the recommendations of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse be accepted nationwide as soon as legislatively possible.

Barry Pilger

**editorial**



**to the  
editor**

Dear editor:

Ed Schwartzkopf's guest opinion (*Daily Nebraskan*, Feb. 9) rings of the kind of outlandish liberalism that attempts to conceal the fundamental issues involved in this nation's electoral process.

He philanders us into believing that voting or participating in an election is manifest of our political power. Political power does not grow out of an election boot, but out of capital and the ability to manipulate that influence towards those ends which are profitable to the capitalist class.

Schwartzkopf also asked us to support a candidate "who has true compassion of and sensitivity for the problems of our society". Perhaps a few of these men exist, but once they are elected the office molds the man, and his first responsibility is to the bankers, corporate executives and military parasites who hold the real power.

Schwartzkopf is no crass amateur when it comes to politics. He wants you to vote. He really doesn't care if you vote for Republican X, Democrat Y, or

Independent Z.

It all boils down to a vote for capitalist A, B or C. No matter who wins, he and the other members of his ruling clique can't lose.

Bruce Todd Maine

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Dear editor:

The party caucuses recently held in Iowa and Arizona were the first real tests of the Democratic Presidential candidates. George McGovern received 23 per cent of the vote in Iowa, compared with 36 per cent for Muskie and 35 per cent uncommitted. In Arizona, McGovern received 20 per cent compared to Muskie's 38 per cent, Lindsay's 24 per cent and 17 per cent uncommitted.

George McGovern is much stronger than most people thought. Support for George McGovern is increasing as people understand and realize that they are in agreement.

Steve Tiwald

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Dear editor:

Students should not be confused by

Roy Baldwin's letter to the editor (*Daily Nebraskan*, Feb. 11) and his assessment of the President's eight-point peace proposal.

Baldwin refutes the point which calls for a pull-back of the North Vietnamese military forces to their homeland. He then asks the reader to "imagine how Roosevelt would have felt if the Germans in 1945 insisted that we withdraw from Europe before they would negotiate with us". This unrealistic comparison leads him to an equally distorted conclusion.

Baldwin ignores the fact that the first point of the plan provides for the total withdrawal of all U.S. and Allied forces, and the fact that agreement to the proposal is not a pre-condition to negotiations.

It is clear that the communists want to deal on their own terms or none at all. Their goal is domination of Southeast Asia and they are willing to wait years to achieve that goal.

Duane Cochran