

By this time, the tip of Hutchinson's nose had disappeared behind the opposite edge of the screen, but that didn't stop him from lying again: "It has health consequences. It is more toxic than tobacco."

The truth:

Research in Jamaica and Greece, funded by the U.S. government, found no physical or mental problems among men who had used marijuana heavily for many years. Numerous studies showed that marijuana did not produce physical dependence and withdrawal, even after long-term, high-dose use.⁸⁶

In 1995, relying on 30 years of scientific research, editors of the internationally respected British medical journal *Lancet* concluded that "the smoking of cannabis, even long term, is not harmful to health."

Saying that pot is more toxic than tobacco is, to be polite, dangerous misrepresentation. To be less polite, it's criminal fraud. Some 430,000 Americans die from the toxic effects of nicotine *each year*. In more than 5,000 years no one has ever recorded the death of a single person from the toxicity of pot. Talk about "sending the wrong message"! Young people who believe Hutchinson will believe they are safer trying cigarettes than experimenting with pot. Many will become addicted, and a third of those will die from the toxic effect.

Lies upon lies upon lies

With distorted evidence, the drug czar and prohibitionist organizations such as The Partnership for a Drug Free America (PDFA) and Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) have frightened teens and parents alike. They have proclaimed, with support from the federal government, such false propaganda as:

Marijuana wrecks the immune system. It's physically addictive. It's a "gateway" to heroin and other hard drugs. It's carcinogenic, more dangerous than tobacco. It's poison. It kills brain cells. It's 10 times stronger, and therefore more dangerous and addictive, than in the 1960s. [That's to scare parents who grew up in the 1960s.] It causes large breasts to grow on young men. [It didn't take long for disappointed transsexuals to disprove that myth.] It causes genetic deformities. It causes users to be susceptible to communist propaganda. It causes cancerous tumors, it causes short-term memory loss – permanently. It incites rape. It causes death. It incites crime, causes marijuana-related hospital emergencies, and is a major cause of highway accidents. It causes fetal alcohol syndrome, homosexual-

ity, and AIDS. It causes children to join gangs and encourages gun possession. And it has no medical value.

Not one of the hundreds of such fabrications has *ever* been confirmed by honest scientific investigation. With the wealth of proven fact available to them, the drug warriors cannot possibly be honestly ignorant, yet they continue their constant drumbeat of deceit. The charges above are so absurd, so preposterous that no one would believe them if they weren't repeated endlessly. And so they repeat them endlessly, in a campaign reminiscent of the Big Lie technique used by Hitler's propagandists. Is it any wonder that millions of parents, police, and even some doctors still believe the misinformation spread by drug warriors?

Studies show that cannabis is not a major DUI concern

One of the classic hobgoblins conjured up by the drug warriors is the image of pot-crazed drivers recklessly causing thousands of deaths on the highways. No one should drive while using any drug, including legal medications *and* marijuana, but in fact marijuana DUIs are negligible compared to alcohol DUIs. Almost invariably, when pot is found in the system of a driver involved in an accident, alcohol is also present.⁸⁷

What does actual research tell us?

- A study conducted by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in 1986, titled *Marijuana and Alcohol: A Driver Performance Study* started from the hypothesis that smoking marijuana diminished a person's ability to operate a vehicle competently. To the CHP's surprise and embarrassment, results showed that some people actually drive more skillfully after smoking marijuana.⁸⁸
- Researchers who conducted a study for the Department of Transportation in 1993 concluded: Of the many psychoactive drugs, licit and illicit, that are available and used by people who subsequently drive, marijuana may well be among the least harmful.⁸⁹
- In a 1993 study, researchers compared marijuana's influence on driving to the influence of low levels of blood alcohol content (.04% BAC, half of the legal limit in many states). Alcohol produced significant reductions in driving ability and marijuana produced none.⁹⁰
- Studies have also found that subjects tend to drive more cautiously after smoking pot. They take fewer risks, drive at slower speeds, and maintain a greater distance from other cars.⁹¹