

Nancy Murphy

"Fifty six cigarettes can be made from one ounce of marijuana. And one cigarette a day is very heavy usage." (Dr. Gabriel Nahas, University of Paris/Columbia University.)

With these words in mind, I read the remarks of Senator Jacob Javits in February, 1973 as he introduced his marijuana decriminalization bill for the second time. He said that because marijuana is tried for a variety of reasons, American law should allow a citizen to possess three ounces of marijuana—in public or in private, to distribute it in public or in private to any person as long as it is not purchased from a profit making source and as long as no profit is made on the distribution.

The 1975 Javits bill was quietly changed to allow possession of "not more than one ounce". I suggest the bill, once passed, could gradually revert to the greater amount, and I further suggest that the Javits bills, even diluted, could become marijuana on demand.

I ask that you consider the report issued May 9, 1974, by the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security, Marijuana-Hashish Epidemic and Its Impact on United States Security. The subcommittee heard testimony from twenty scientists of seven nations, all concerned with marijuana research. A part of that report is briefly summarized here.

The Scientific Findings

1) THC, the principle psychoactive factor in Cannabis (the hemp plant from which marijuana and hashish are extracted) tends to accumulate in the brain, the gonads and other fatty tissues in the manner of DDT.

2) Marijuana, even when used moderately, causes massive damage to the entire cellular process. (a) It reduces the rate at which new cells are produced. (b) Used three times a week, it results in a 41 per cent reduction in the production of cells involved in the immune process, thereby lessening the ability of the body chemistry to resist disease. And (c) it reduces the chromosome complements "from 38 to 8

CORRECTION

In this column published 6/25/75 a line was inadvertently omitted from the third paragraph.

The full text of that paragraph reads:

(Naturally a state constitution has no power over the federal draft, although it does have such power, as we have noted in the state of Maryland, over the state militia; a state constitution holds no power over the social security system; the Maryland legislation introduced almost immediately after ERA approval in 1972 indicates the direction state laws have taken as a result of hasty ratification. In many instances — especially in family support — these Maryland bills are direct contradictions of the comforting opinions I received second-hand from the legislators.)

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chromosomes instead of the normal 46."

3) Related to its tendency to accumulate in the brain, and its capacity for cellular damage, there is evidence that marijuana inflicts irreversible damage to the brain, including atrophy (the wasting away of an organ), when used in a chronic manner over a period of years.

4) There is a growing body of evidence that marijuana adversely affects the human reproductive process in numerous ways. "It poses the danger of genetic damage and even of genetic mutation." (a) Male hormone levels have been reduced by 44 per cent in young males who used marijuana at least four times a week for six months. (requiring less than 2 ounces of marijuana.) (b) Sperm counts were so dramatically reduced (in some cases falling to near zero) that sterility was reached. (c) Very heavy smoking can result in impotence. (d) In animal experimentation, spermatoids were found to be abnormal inasmuch as they carried reduced amounts of DNA. (e) Regular use of marijuana, even once a week, results in three times as many broken chromosomes as normal, suggesting the possibility of genetic abnormalities. (f) Also in animal tests, marijuana was found to cause "a very high rate of fetal deaths and fetal abnormalities, including runting and a lack of limbs — the thalidomide effect."

5) Chronic smoking can produce sinusitis, pharyngitis, bronchitis, emphysema, and other respiratory difficulties "in a year or less, as opposed to 10 to 20 years of cigarette smoking to produce comparable complications." Emphysema is now beginning to show in young people — a whole generation of respiratory cripples.

6) Cannabis smoke, especially when mixed with cigarette smoke, brings on pre-cancerous damage to the lungs.

7) Chronic use results in deterioration of mental functioning, pathological forms of thinking (resembling paranoia), "a massive and chronic passivity", and a lack of motivation. The manifestations are apathy, dullness, and the impairment of judgement, concentration and memory. A total loss of will could make a population of cannabis/marijuana smokers easy prey to manipulation.

I will concentrate next week on the social consequences of the Marijuana Epidemic as described in the Senate report. Senator Sam O. Eastland chaired the subcommittee.

Documentation sources available on request.

Stapleton Heads Trinity Board

Auburn — The Blessed Trinity School Board held its final meeting of the school year on June 19. The board approved a budget to be presented to the three pastors and their finance committees.

Michael Stapleton was elected president; Robert Welch, vice president, and Marcia Bisgrove, secretary.

Newly elected to the board are Mrs. Marilyn Wride of Holy Family Parish and Frank Antonacci of Sacred Heart. Harold Casper was reelected from St. Alponus.

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More Opinions

Priest Assails Homosexual Acts

Editor:

A letter writer to the Courier (6/25/75) states, "God created all human beings and we are all equal in his eyes. Who are we to treat anyone else as a lesser or to say that their existence is 'unholy.' As a Catholic and a gay activist, I fight for something that God has given but men have denied — equality."

The term, "gay liberationist" is of rather recent origin. It seems to imply the practice of homosexuality, i.e. sexuality with those of one's own sex.

In the Old Testament this was the sin that brought down fire from Heaven on the two sinful cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah. Catholics regard homosexuality as a very grave sin: it is an abnormality, a deviation from normal sexuality, a sin against nature. God created the sexes and sexual love that, in love, children might be procreated and brought into the world. Homosexuality is an abnormality. It is one of the most disgusting aberrations of human sexuality. Fornication and adultery are grave sins before God but at least they are in response to a normal sex urge, and perhaps a true love. Homosexuality is so repulsive because it is so very unnatural.

The writer states, "God created all human beings and we are all equal in his eyes." Certainly, as human beings, as we are all equal in God's sight but let us not be so naive as to think that God does not see any difference between the saint and the sinner. St. Paul says, "All uncleanness, let it not be so much as mentioned among you. Those who do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God."

Again, the writer asks the

question, "Who are we to treat anyone else as a lesser or to say that their existence is 'Unholy.' However, the point at issue is not 'existence' but rather 'manner of existence.'" We have in society, murderers, thieves, adulterers, rapists, etc. Are we to expect that these people shall be treated with the same respect as other citizens?

Homosexuality is a very grave sin. Catholics who are homosexually oriented must 1) realize that all fully deliberate sex acts with others outside of marriage are mortal sins; 2) that they have a grave obligation to change their mental outlook and ways of thinking; 3) they must pray and go to confession; 4) they must realize that they have before them only one of two choices — Heaven or Hell. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?"

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Irish Dancing Competition Set

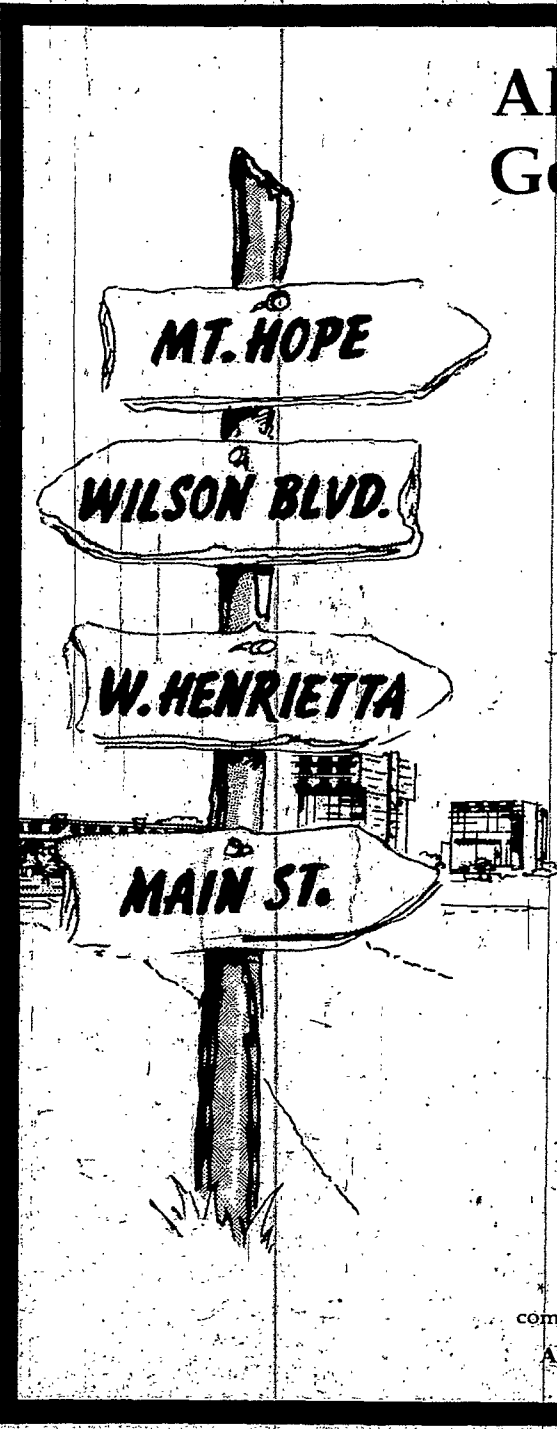
The Feis Rochester committee is lining up competitors for an Irish dancing extravaganza to be held July 12 at Monroe County Fairgrounds.

Trophies and medals will be awarded in more than 100 contests, according to cochairmen Neil Daly and Seamus McGinnity. The rules of the North American Feis Commission will prevail, they said.

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