

The Coatpuller

John Sinclair

1967

The Marijuana Scare is getting weirder and weirder, with the grass police moving backwards faster every day, trying to bust everybody they can before the laws won't let them do it any more. As far as I'm concerned the busts first in Detroit, and now at Grosse Pointe and Livonia high schools, are the best thing that could have happened at this time—short of legalizing grass altogether, of course. Because the only way the police have been able to keep up their screen of lies and fear is by keeping it all “under ground,” where no straight people could see what was happening. Now, with the silly narcotics police breaking in on their sons and daughters almost every day, the middle-class citizens of our time are beginning to wonder about marijuana prohibition—and it's just about time.

First it was civil rights, or whatever they called it, and peace, and the war in Vietnam, with the solid citizens starting to wake up and see exactly what they had been doing to their brothers and sisters all those years. And now that the revolution is being carried on by their alienated kids, who are digging around in the forbidden territory of their SELVES with such contemporary spiritual tools as marijuana and LSD, the citizens are having to face the fact that they have sent thousands of innocent gentle grass smokers (including myself) to the jails and concentration camps of America without even knowing what was going on.

Guilt works in funny ways, as most of my liberal friends in “analysis” can tell you, and maybe it'll work on these folks so that the rest of us can smoke grass and dig ourselves in peace—and work thereby to make this a happier and more human world for them AND us. We are not selfish—we want EVERYBODY to get in on the lovely world we can see, and every body can take part in it as they will. “Let me in, I wanna be there,” they're pounding on the door, and thousands of smiling hippies turn the handle murmuring, “yeah, ok man, you don't have to holler, everything's all right...”

Detroit LEMAR would like very much to get in touch with the two young men from Grosse Pointe, and the kids in Livonia, who became victims of the Narco James Bond-fantasy-undercover agent fever that's raging through the doddering frame of the law enforcement agencies. We may be able to help you. Please do not be frightened, above all, and don't let these misled bums run over your lives. The world is yours, but you have to let them know it. If you are able, and if your lawyers don't object, please contact us at 831-6840 or at the LEMAR offices, 4857 John Lodge, in Detroit.

Word has it that Senator Roger E. Craig, of Dearborn, has sponsored a bill in the Michigan Legislature calling for the removal of marijuana from the narcotics statutes—an action which would probably place it on the “dangerous drug” list, along with amphetamines, barbiturates, and LSD. [See “Marijuana Bill Trips Michigan Senate” in this issue.] Of course there is absolutely nothing “wrong” with the harmless bush, and if hearings are held in the Senate I'm hoping that the truth will finally come to light. But this is certainly a start in the right direction—as it stands now, the law provides for a one-to-ten year sentence for the possession of even one marijuana cigarette, and from 20 years to life imprisonment (that's a 20-year MINIMUM) for sale of even one joint. If it were placed on the “dangerous drug” list, the penalty would drop to from one to four years in prison.

At any rate, there will be a benefit for Senator Craig's Campaign fund at the Grande Ballroom, presented by my Uncle Russ, on Sunday, the 2nd of April, featuring Billie C. and the Sunshine, the great new Seventh Seal of Ann

Arbor, the MC-5, and lots of other people who would show their support for the senator's efforts publicly, in such a context. Please attend.

Stay tuned in for more information on the huge pre-May Day LOVE-IN on Belle Isle April 30th—details aren't completed yet, due to the indecision of the city's Recreation and Parks Board, but I'll have the final details for you in the next column here. There will be bands, poets, lovers, eaters, bells, incense, grass and flowers and trees, food and drink, and lots of love for all who can make it—wherever it's held.

LATE FLASHES: Cecil Taylor, the genius American pianist/composer, will be in Detroit for the first time April 8 and 9, at the Detroit Jazz Festival. Don't miss him please!... Word gets to me that the JEFFERSON AIRPLANE will be in Ann Arbor around April 14-15.

Call the Fifth Estate office (962-9336) or the Trans Love Energies (831-6840) for information. Hopefully we'll have them in Detroit, at the community Grande, if all goes well with the money... Buy the MC-5's record, "Just One of the Guys," and call your local d-j to get to play it on the radio... Southbound Freeway's new record, "Psychedelic Used Car Lot Blues," made the WKNR top 31 list last week—congratulations! ... Anyone who knows anything about setting up an FCC-approved radio station, and/or anyone who would be interested in backing a Trans-Love Airwaves station with MONEY, please get in touch with me or Barry Kramer (at Mixed Media, 5704 Cass, 871-9736). Let's get the sound of MUSIC on the air—NOW!

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