

its profits. The police could return to protecting us from real criminals; and there would be room enough in existing prisons for them.

### **Try Personal Responsibility**

It's time to re-legalize drugs and let people take responsibility for themselves. Drug abuse is a tragedy and a sickness.

Criminal laws only drive the problem underground and put money in the pockets of the criminal class. With drugs legal, compassionate people could do more to educate and rehabilitate drug users who seek help. Drugs should be legal. Individuals have the right to decide for themselves what to put in their bodies, so long as they take responsibility for their actions.

From the Mayor of Baltimore, Kurt Schmoke, to conservative writer and TV personality, William F. Buckley, Jr., leading Americans are now calling for repeal of America's repressive and ineffective drug laws.

The Libertarian Party urges you to join in this effort to make our streets safer and our liberties more secure.

### **Libertarian Party platform on Personal Liberty**

*Individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept responsibility for the consequences of the choices they make. No individual, group, or government may initiate force against any other individual, group, or government. Our support of an individual's right to make choices in life does not mean that we necessarily approve or disapprove of those choices.*



PO Box 28141  
Raleigh NC 27611-8141  
1.877.843.5762  
info@lpnc.org



# **Toward A More Sensible Drug Policy**

*Drug abuse is a tragedy and a sickness. Here's how we can start fixing the problem — instead of making it worse.*



# Should We *Re-Legalize* Drugs?

**L**ibertarians, like most Americans, demand to be safe at home and on the streets. Libertarians would like all Americans to be healthy and free of drug dependence. But drug laws don't help, they make things worse.

The professional politicians scramble to make names for themselves as tough anti-drug warriors, while the experts agree that the "war on drugs" has been lost, and could never be won. The tragic victims of that war are your personal liberty and its companion, responsibility. **It's time to consider the re-legalization of drugs.**

## The Lessons of Prohibition

In the 1920's, alcohol was made illegal by Prohibition. The result: Organized Crime. Criminals jumped at the chance to supply the demand for liquor. The streets became battlegrounds. The criminals bought off law enforcement and judges. Adulterated booze blinded and killed people. Civil rights were trampled in the hopeless attempt to keep people from drinking.

When the American people saw what Prohibition was doing to them, they supported its repeal. When they succeeded, most states

legalized liquor and the criminal gangs were out of the liquor business.

## Today's war on drugs is a re-run of Prohibition.

Approximately 40 million Americans are occasional, peaceful users of some illegal drug who are no threat to anyone. They are not going to stop. The laws don't, and can't, stop drug use.

## Organized Crime Profits

Whenever there is a great demand for a product and government makes it illegal, a black market always appears to supply the demand. The price of the product rises dramatically and the opportunity for huge profits is obvious.

The criminal gangs love the situation, making millions. They kill other drug dealers, along with innocent people caught in the crossfire, to protect their territory. They corrupt police and courts. Pushers sell adulterated dope and experimental drugs, causing injury and death. And because drugs are illegal, their victims have no recourse.

## Crime Increases

Half the cost of law enforcement and prisons is squandered on drug related crime. Of all drug users, a relative few are addicts who commit crimes daily to supply artificially expensive habits. They are the robbers, car thieves and burglars who make our homes and streets unsafe.



## An American Police State

**Civil liberties suffer.** We are all "suspects", subject to random urine tests, highway check points and spying into our personal finances. Your property can be seized without trial, if the police merely claim you got it with drug profits.

Doing business with cash makes you a suspect. America is becoming a police state because of the war on drugs.

## America Can Handle Legal Drugs

**Today's illegal drugs were legal before 1914.** Cocaine was even found in the original Coca-Cola recipe. Americans had few problems with cocaine, opium, heroin or marijuana. Drugs were inexpensive; crime was low. Most users handled their drug of choice and lived normal, productive lives. Addicts out of control were a tiny minority.

The first laws prohibiting drugs were racist in origin — to prevent Chinese laborers from using opium and to prevent blacks and Hispanics from using cocaine and marijuana.

**That was unjust and unfair, just as it is unjust and unfair to make criminals of peaceful drug users today.**

Some Americans will always use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other drugs. Most are not addicts, they are social drinkers or occasional users. Legal drugs would be inexpensive, so even addicts could support their habits with honest work, rather than by crime. Organized crime would be deprived of