

A Few minutes with the Boss

By: Joseph Andalina

Is the war on seatbelts a failure...and how about the War on Drugs?

A two-part opinion piece

In Part I, I made a satirical comparison on seatbelts and drugs to illustrate a point that both are problems which are detrimental to society if not enforced.

Part II follows with more on the War on Drugs, which some say is a bigger failure...

Since many, according to a news report, are black or Hispanic, they go to jail in larger proportions than say, Italians. I don't want to say white because I don't want to make this racial. But it partly is. That's why Toni and Jesse are on TV and not Giuliani. But Italians take drugs and so do other folks.

There is a modicum of truth here to the proportion of incarcerated ethnic groups. But lots of people of all colors use drugs, and lots of people of all colors go to jail. I know some, too. Friends, extended family, and even people in my 'hood.

So is it all the worse that more minorities get arrested than whites or Irish folks? Are the police ignoring the Jewish marijuana users, the WASP coke sniffers, the mobbed up dispensers of ecstasy or the Asian opium freebaser? Really, if you get caught with dope, you get caught with dope.

Race, race, race. It's always there and always a harbinger of political correctness. But if it's illegal to use drugs and use them and you get caught and you go to jail or you die, then that is all your choice. The war is first within the users and it is we rational people who want to prevent it from infecting others that don't recreate in this fashion.

Do we need a commissioner who came up from the liberal bastion of the Kenwood-Hyde Park area of Chicago as the Chicago Tribune reports, telling us that the War on Drugs is a failure? Really, she and Jesse? Yeah, I know there are other Libertarians and liberals that would agree, too.

So we need the Reverend to relate in his alliterative style that drugs should be legalized so minorities don't go to jail more than whites? Is that what this is about? To him, I'm sure it is.

Preckwinkle says it costs the Cook County Jail \$150 a day to detain one drug user. She wants to invest in treatment, education, and job skills training to reduce crime and stabilize our communities. Don't some druggies get treatment while in the can? Sure they do—court ordered, too. Are they all clean now and never slide back to narcotic use?

Anyone check out the costs of doctors and physical therapy? Then teachers, counselors, and job trainers? Me thinks that would cost more than \$150 a day. Who will pay for that? Oh yeah, we can redistribute some wealth.

Others have said it will stop the drug wars and we can tax it, sell it and monitor it. Mercy. If you look at the comments of airheads who blog they are always talking about how they like to relax with a little weed while some of us who do not partake like their Grey Goose. It's their choice, they say. Please legalize it, they beg; it is harmless. How many families have been destroyed because they sold or smoked a little pot, they implore? Okay—I'll bite—how many? (Are these the same folks who claim the death penalty has executed innocent people? It hasn't.)

Peaceful pot smokers rot in prison, they say. Incarceration doesn't cure addiction. No, it doesn't, but it keeps them away from us. And the beat goes on. So are we talking just pot here? Or is it the War on Real Bad Drugs we are talking about? Or is it the War on those who only want to take a few tokes and show their fellow potheads how funny they really are?

If the War on Drugs is obliterated, will it apply to those who want to use Seconal, LSD, white cross, mescaline, mushrooms, heroin—both black and white and in between—cocaine, freebased, sniffed, snorted, and chipped? How about ecstasy? Mickey Finns and licking toads?

Anyone want a bag of airplane model glue? I didn't buy this much paint thinner for nothing, you know. So what is it? Nobody seems to want to tell, and no cooing TV reporters or others ask that question. Is it just the green plant that we failed on, or is it **all** the drugs? Are they talking decriminalizing pot or crack or smack?

Is it only the War on Mary Jane a failure, but we'll still fight some skirmishes and set up a picket line for the other bad habits that humans ingest? Maybe Ms. Preckwinkle will remove all the taxes in Cook County that Mr. Stroger started if we can establish a tax base on people who want to buy some grass, chocolate chips, and a High Times magazine. (Bongs and papers can be double taxed as items for amusement.)

Then that money can be used to pay for all the addictions of the gateway drug users when they buy dope and get addicted, or it becomes a habit like cigarettes, or God forbid they go onto other stuff that Hollywood likes to make movies about.

It's all talking points. All crap without substance. All politicians and activists who have an agenda, whatever that might be. Then if they get their way, many of you will be stuck dealing with the neighbors whose kids are disrupting **your** 'hood with their rave parties.

Or finding out the people killed in the car accident were under the influence of some Tai sticks. And what is the number for determining that you are under the influence of some devil weed while driving? Figure that one out. What **new** laws are going to be made to regulate what behaviors you can behave in while bogarting that joint? Inquiring minds want to know.

All you coppers, black, brown, white, Italian, may even get laid off now because now you aren't needed anymore to prevent drug sales or use.

You need to quit law enforcement and be a...a.. job trainer. Yep, that's the ticket. All of you correctional officers can just open the doors and let little Bob, Tom, Dick, or Ursula go free. You can be doctors now to treat the addictions. Or you can open up your own shop and sell some of your home grown brand "ditchweed."

Has anyone even thought this out? Does anybody ever say anything other than sound bytes just to appease teaheads?

If the government legalizes cannabis and the smoker goes on to shoot heroin, is the government guilty of drug-induced manslaughter if the heroin user dies or kills someone? Or if the lambs bread smoker racks up his car and kills little Johnny at the corner park? What then?

Well, will there be law firms springing up to sue those who misuse legalized drugs like there are for seatbelt failures? This is America and it will happen. But maybe the government with the tax stamp will also add a disclaimer. I know one—"caveat emptor."

Provide some answers and maybe this will make sense, because it doesn't now.

Finally, what about you in law enforcement? While your humble reporter will die a virgin as I have never taken as much as a puff of anything or imbibed anything stronger than Glenlivet, or on occasion, some Jack, there must be a few lonely law enforcement types out there who will follow the new law and buy a few grams for a roll-your-own party.

Will there be a double standard and a law to prevent public servants from smoking, snorting, or shooting up? Can you call your sergeant on Sunday and say, Sarge, I had some really good Bambalache and ate some Alice B Toklas (brownies laced with weed) and then I booted the gong in a bong like I saw Michael Phelps do on TV and you know, I'm just too stoned to come to work today. Is it okay for me to sleep it off? I may not be of much use on the street tonight.

Stay safe.

Vita é Bella

Editor: A final few thoughts. While my two-part opinion is my opinion and slightly tongue-in-cheek as in my style, there might be nuggets of wisdom there. Well, maybe not, but think about it. What if Acapulco Gold is legalized and other nefarious substances decriminalized? Treatment is the option. What if you get treated and then you fail and commit more crime? More treatment? What if you get fired from a job because you're blowing a stick on a construction site and would rather do that than work on any shovel ready project? More job training?

When is jail the alternative in this politically correct world we are living in? What do you tell your kids? Stanley, it's okay for you to cop some ganja, but buy the reefer at Walgreens, it's not as harsh. And while you're at it, get some for mom later. It's our date night; know what I mean, son?

Other hard core drugs? Help us Lord! It will be a never ending dam of addiction, treatment, and failure. Instead of one law that fits all colors, our government wants a diverse, multi-colored law built on a foundation of lies. One flavor no longer suits all.

This will really make the liberals peeved, to say nothing of the weed whackers out there.
Happiness comes in a blunt!

Okay, it's a sickness, some say. Wait, who says that? I know, drug users, criminals, defense attorneys, addicts, and their enablers. Not the hope and change I envisioned, folks. You have a choice in life. One of them is not to take drugs. Any kind, anywhere, anyway. But people do and you will never stop that.

But I say it's your choice to and mine not to. If you go to jail—you put yourself there.