

Scare Tactic Dubbed Marijuana Article

February 26, 1969

Dear Editor:

As an interested reader, I am compelled to comment on your recent article dealing with the dangers of marijuana.

In the last issue of the Tundra Times, at page two, the author could raise but one substantial argument against the use of marijuana, and this was an obscure reference which alleged in part: "... the user may try stronger substances, including heroin." However, this conclusion is totally invalid as any degree of factual investigation has consistently failed to support this claim. The articles reasoning, in effect, suggests that we outlaw necessities such as airplanes because some aircraft in the past was involved in an accident. In any event, heroin is virtually nonexistent here in Alaska, and also, most of us realize that heroin kills.

If any single factor can be said to contribute to teen-age experimentation with hard-core narcotics, it would probably be our attraction to the forbidden fruit, (pot) and the resulting discovery of your deceit—that your marijuana boogie man is nothing but a paper tiger. This discovery could possibly jolt the adolescent mind into questioning the establishments opinion concerning stronger substances.

Would it not be a more truthful and reasonable approach to our youth if we eliminated the boogie man scare tactics and forbidden fruit status of pot? The present unenlightened furor over this harmless herb is not very becoming to we native Alaskans. Certainly a more realistic and progressive move would be to enact legislation regulating the sale and use of marijuana in the same way liquor is regulated. Not only would such a procedure assist in curing our Second Avenue drunk problem here in Fairbanks, but it would also tend to curb the State's growing tendency towards passing laws against the symptoms of societies illnesses while ignoring the underlying cuases of the sickness.

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