

November 3: D-Day in the War to End the War on Drugs

The conventional wisdom of the last hundred years or so: The US government can and should decide what we may eat, drink, smoke, inject, or otherwise ingest. It can and should kidnap and cage us if we disobey, and if its restrictions kill us with adulterated or unduly strong black market products, it's our own fault for not doing as we're told.

Common sense: Unless you're a six-year-old listening to your mother's stern "no broccoli, no dessert" lecture, what you choose to eat, drink, smoke, inject, or otherwise ingest is nobody's business but yours.

November 3 was D-Day in common sense's war to shatter the conventional wisdom.

"Of nine drug decriminalization or legalization measures on state ballots," Elizabeth Nolan Brown reports at *Reason*, "not a single one failed. These were decisive victories, too, not close calls."

Americans from coast to coast, north to south, in states red and blue, voted by huge margins to nullify federal laws on medical and/or recreational marijuana, psychedelics, even "hard" drugs.

The US government's war on drugs is going to end sooner or later. Sooner is better for everyone, so let's start talking about the terms of DC's surrender.

Given the millions of arrests, imprisonments, overdoses and murders, etc. caused by the war on drugs — numbers exceeding the Armenian genocide beyond a shadow of doubt, and quite possibly competing for pride of place with Hitler's atrocities — Americans could hardly be blamed for convening a Nuremberg-style tribunal and stretching some drug warrior necks. The longer this nonsense drags on, the more likely that outcome.

On the other hand, the next Congress and the next administration could get to work repealing all federal drug laws, pardoning and releasing all drug war prisoners, abolishing the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Office of National Drug Control Policy, etc.

If the US government gets off the dime, lays down its weapons, and starts removing its troops from the field in an orderly manner, I suspect most Americans would as soon let bygones be bygones.

Yes, some DEA agents and other vicious parasites will have to give up the thug life and seek jobs in the productive sector.

Yes, some politicians will end up with a little less money and power to spread around

among the special interest lobbies who fund their campaigns.

Yes, some megalomaniacs will require treatment for the depression that accompanies a lessened ability to order others around.

Unless you're one of the sociopaths mentioned above, none of that sounds half bad. And even if you are in that category, it probably sounds better than the eventual, inevitable alternative: A gurney and a lethal injection (poetic justice, eh?) at Federal Correctional Institution, Terre Haute.

Let's get this over with.