

# Time to Right Marijuana Wrongs

Once a state's marijuana rules have changed, everyone with marijuana charges on their record should get a clean slate. At least where marijuana is concerned. Then they need to be paid the restitution they are owed by those who harmed them.

People arrested or fined for a crime that is no longer a crime deserve a break. Those who were jailed over marijuana were wronged. Those who were fined need to be repaid the money that was taken under phony pretexts. All for a "crime" which, finally, after nearly 100 years of false claims and shoddy justifications, is recognized as not actually wrong.

Would you still consider runaway slaves criminals, with a record, after slavery was abolished? False claims and shoddy justification were used to excuse that evil institution, too.

What you ingest has never been government's business. Pretending it is doesn't make it so. Punishing people for ignoring the arbitrary wishes of politicians is wrong. Those who do wrong — even if someone else has told them to do it — owe restitution to their victims. "I was only following orders" has never excused such behavior.

Something can't be wrong one day and not wrong the next, or OK one day and illegal the next; based only on the opinions of smug politicians. Situations like this are why I have no respect for legislation. This exposes the absurdity of the whole system.

It seems silly to keep punishing people for past marijuana offenses, which is what is happening if those offenses stay on their record.

Even if the arrested individuals did something that will still be technically illegal under the new rules, it's long past time to let prohibition go. It's no more sensible than the witch trials of the 1690s or the alcohol prohibition of the 1920s. Everyone who once "waged war on weed" looks as bad as those who came before them, and in the future may even look worse.

If you're going to insist on having police and government courts they need to focus only on those acts where someone's life, liberty, or property has been harmed. Beyond this is where any legitimacy ends. It's not a fuzzy gray area; it ends hard at that line. If they violate anyone's life, liberty, or property in the course of doing their jobs, they've become what they claim to be fighting. Prohibition is one example of them having done exactly this.

It's time to make it right.