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SOCIAL ORIGINS OF THE MARIJUANA LAWS

Dr. David Musto debunks the myth of “Horrible Hurry” Anslinger. He depicts the former head of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics more as a “reluctant dragon,” representing an equivocating Federal Government that caved in to racist fears of Mexican migrant workers.

The prohibition of marijuana was promoted and facilitated by certain doctors and resisted by the pharmaceutical industry and others of the medical profession.

The byzantine mosaic of events leading up to that strange bearing is explored. Then, the American Medical Association representative strongly favored the retention of marijuana for use as a medicine. The house liberals, still smarting from the AMA’s blocking of national health insurance’s inclusion in the Social Security Act, raked him over the coals as being an obstructionist to the good health of the country.

The National Institute of Health’s pharmacology expert testified that prolonged marijuana use could lead to insanity. The NIH medical expert said that marijuana could produce a frenzy that might result in violence.

A nationally known addiction specialist described marijuana to be worse than opium.

This well-researched paper chronicles the timeless nature of bigotry and the all-too-easy bureaucratic acquiescence to this evil.