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AGNEW CRITICIZES USE OF MARIJUANA

Defends Whisky Drinkers in His Generation

By JAMES M. NAUGHTON
Special to The New York Times

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., June 23—Vice President Agnew, defending his generation against charges of hypocrisy, spoke out here today against the use of marijuana.

It will take courage, Mr. Agnew said, to stand up to those who say that "the older generation is hypocritical when it drinks whisky but registers shock at the smoking of marijuana."

The Vice President, addressing 1,000 delegates and guests at a convention of the National Sheriffs' Association, said that American society was "being caught up in and carried along by a steadily mounting wave of drug abuse." He recounted efforts by the Nixon Administration to provide a national clearinghouse for drug education material and to make Federal laws on narcotics more realistic. But he said that was not enough.

"We must stand up for things that we believe are right and talk out against those things we consider wrong, even if occasionally we are found to be in error," he said. "In our opinion, marijuana is dangerous. It is not just the grown-up equivalent of alcohol."

The difference, Mr. Agnew said, is that alcohol has been known for thousands of years and won the approval of peoples and governments, while marijuana, with an equally long history, has been prohibited by every country acquainted with its use.

"That is a striking fact," Mr. Agnew said. "It may not be proof of marijuana's danger, but it is a weighty historical point and I believe that, until strong evidence to the contrary is brought forward, stronger than we have now, we must assume that this drug is dangerous. And knowing that, we must have the courage to stand up and say to our children, 'no, pot is not the equivalent of whisky.'"

The Vice President, whose attitude toward marijuana is in sharp contrast with that of not only many young Americans but also of some Government officials and researchers, said it was an "alarming fact" that "we may be just in the first stages of [a] collective national 'trip.'"

He said that the nation is "in the midst of a drug culture that threatens the future of our society if we do not act quickly, forcefully and intelligently to bring it under control."