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Letter to the Editor

Legalisation of marijuana for medical use in Mexico. Open file ☆

Legalización para uso médico de la marihuana en México. Expediente abierto



Dear Editor,

The war against drugs Mexico has lived through in recent years has resulted in thousands of deaths and disappearances,¹ and the escape and recapture, twice, of the country's main drug trafficker. The legalisation of marijuana in the states of Colorado and Washington in the United States has led to reflection on the relevance of maintaining its illegal status.²

It is important to point out that traditionally in the indigenous culture this narcotic was used in religious rites and in shamanism; its accepted use in that era is mentioned in writings and songs, alongside peyote and other hallucinogenic mushrooms.³

More and more medical publications report the benefits in terms of analgesia and control of vomiting in patients with cancer, AIDS and neurological diseases.⁴

Two years ago in Mexico, following a request from the parents of a paediatric patient who suffered intractable seizures (up to 400 events a day) with conventional therapy, and with the support of four people from civil society, the prohibition was challenged before the Mexican Supreme Court of Justice for this particular case. A precedent was set for the future and the story forced the need for a national discussion on the relevance of continuing with the prohibition of marijuana; a committee has been set up, headed by a former Health Secretary and prominent members of academia, politics and society in general.

Uruguay has been a pioneer in Latin America in dealing with this subject from a legal point of view. Legal use of marijuana by medical indication has recently been approved in

Mexico.⁵ Therefore, the debate for total decriminalisation in the future remains open.

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