

The Adam Smith Institute Blog

Written by Tom Clougherty

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[Courtesy](#) of the Cato Institute's Juan Carlos Hidalgo:

Mexican President Felipe Calderón seems to be experiencing a dramatic change of mind regarding his war against drug cartels. Soon after a drug gang set fire to a casino in Monterrey a few weeks ago killing 52 people, Calderón told the media that “‘If [the Americans] are determined and resigned to consuming drugs, they should look for market alternatives that annul the stratospheric profits of the criminals, or establish clear points of access that are not the border with Mexico.’” Many people interpreted that as a veiled reference to drug legalization.

Yesterday, during a speech to the Americas Society and Council of the Americas in New York, Calderón was at it again: “We must do everything to reduce demand for drugs,” he said. “But if the consumption of drugs cannot be limited, then decision-makers must seek more solutions—including market alternatives—in order to reduce the astronomical earnings of criminal organizations.”

After launching a military offensive against drug cartels that has resulted in approximately 42,000 people killed in drug-related violence thus far, it appears that President Calderón has finally realized that the war on drugs is a futile endeavor and that drug legalization is the only alternative to the mayhem.

Better late than never, I suppose.