

Scientologist supporter Sheriff Lee Baca, intoxicated by money and hysteria, makes rookie mistakes in campaign against marijuana

Posted By [Pete Guither](#) On September 9, 2010 @ 1:53 am In [Uncategorized](#) | [No Comments](#)

Sheriff Lee Baca, co-chair of the Prop 19 opposition has certainly been outspoken.

The Los Angeles County sheriff has escalated his war of words against California medical marijuana dispensaries, saying as many as 97 percent operate as criminal enterprises.

Some of the pot shops get marijuana from Mexican drug cartels, and most dole out pot to people with no medical need for it, Sheriff Lee Baca said.

"Millions of dollars are being made for profit, and it's all illegal," the sheriff said this week.

Baca presented no evidence to support his claim. His comments coincided with a recent announcement that he would lead efforts against a November ballot measure to legalize marijuana for personal use in California. [...]

...two workers at different dispensaries have been killed during robberies in recent weeks.

"It is no surprise that people are going to get killed ... drugs and violence go together," Baca said.

He is, however, no match for the good folks at the [Just Say Now](#) ^[1] campaign.

Jane Hamsher came out with a scathing exposé of Baca today: "[No on 19](#)" Says "Yes" to Scientology ^[2]

She starts by shooting down his unsupported claims:

Los Angeles Police Chief Charles Beck has disputed Baca's claim. "Banks are more likely to get robbed than medical marijuana dispensaries," he told the Daily News in January.

Beck's department looked into the assertion made by Baca and others that dispensaries attract criminal activity to neighborhoods. The LAPD subsequently issued a report saying that just wasn't the case. "I have tried to verify that because that, of course, is the mantra," said Beck. "It doesn't really bear out."

And then she goes on to expose Sheriff Baca's connections to Scientology and the entire Narconon treatment industry.

Check out Sheriff Baca's own statement to the Scientology Church (video at the link):

You have been consistently reliable in helping me to achieve my goal for a safer Los Angeles County. In particular, your drug education means everything to the safety of our schools and neighborhoods. That is why we trained a corps of our own deputies in the use of your unbeatable program. This joint venture to educate youth at risk is one of the most important initiatives I could undertake as Sheriff of Los Angeles County.

Narconon has been demonstrated to have no scientific credibility, yet it continues to rake in the dough from criminal justice referrals, a cozy arrangement that now shows Sheriff Baca in bed with them.

Hamsher concludes:

By choosing Lee Baca as co-chair of "No on 19" and offering him a platform to advance the theories of L. Ron Hubbard on their behalf, the campaign has associated itself with claims of dubious legitimacy that serve the interests of a revenue-generating enterprise. Any medical treatment organization that demands the criminalization of its patients in order to guarantee participation in their program should be instantly suspect, as should those like No on 19 Co-Chair Lee Baca who proselytize on their behalf.

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But wait — That was just the first salvo today.

[Norm Stamper](#) ^[3]:

Sheriff Baca says 'there are predators armed and seeking easy dollars in sales of marijuana.' He's right. There is altogether too much marijuana-related violence in California. It's been going on for years and, unless the marijuana prohibition is lifted — and replaced with a taxed, regulated, and controlled system — it will continue unabated. It's that simple. The sheriff needs to ask himself, Would the three recent murders in West Hollywood have happened if marijuana were legal, its commerce controlled like alcohol? He knows the answer to that question, and so does Senator Feinstein. Marijuana prohibition is the cause of violence, not the cure.

And Doug Bandow, former Special Assistant to President Reagan:

Since banks, jewelry stores, and wealthy homeowners attract thieves and robbers, presumably Sheriff Baca will next campaign for financial, jewelry, and wealth prohibition. After all, there wouldn't be any bank robberies if there were no banks.

In fact, as has long been evident, it is drug prohibition that generates untold violent and destructive crime. The sheriff is entitled to his opinion as co-chair of the anti-marijuana legalization campaign, but he shouldn't distort his official duties to promote his political pursuits. The only way to end drug-related violence is to stop arresting users and turning production and sales over to criminals."

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No, that's not all.

[Eric Sterling: No on 19 Co-Chair Lee Baca "Intoxicated by the Money and Hysteria Against Marijuana"](#) ^[4]

In the early 1980s, heroin and other opiate addicts were robbing pharmacies around the country because of they were a source for pure narcotics of certain dosage. U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde introduced legislation to make robbery of pharmacies a federal crime. I was the attorney who handled that legislation for the House Judiciary Committee, and we developed a bill that passed, P.L. 98-305 (May 31, 1984), 18 U.S.C. 2118.

No one blamed the pharmacies or their customers! No one said, "Pharmacies are a magnet for crime!" Robbers look for opportunities where there is money or valuable property — banks, jewelry stores, fast food restaurants, liquor stores, etc. Criminologists and intelligent observers of crime don't blame the victims.

Unfortunately because medical marijuana dispensaries are not fully legal — due to federal law — they have trouble contracting with private security services or getting business insurance as other businesses do routinely.

If Sheriff Baca weren't intoxicated by the money and hysteria against marijuana, he would not be making this kind of rookie mistaken analysis.

Good job by Jane Hamsher and the board of Just Say Now to expose the true nature of the Prop 19 opposition.

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URLs in this post:

- [1] Just Say Now: <http://www.justsaynow.com/>
- [2] "No on 19" Says "Yes" to Scientology: <http://fdlaction.firedoglake.com/2010/09/08/no-on-19-says-yes-to-scientology/>
- [3] Norm Stamper: <http://fdlaction.firedoglake.com/2010/09/08/just-say-now-lee-baca-shouldnt-distort-his-official-duties-to-promote-his-political-pursuits/>
- [4] Eric Sterling: No on 19 Co-Chair Lee Baca "Intoxicated by the Money and Hysteria Against Marijuana": <http://fdlaction.firedoglake.com/2010/09/08/eric-sterling-no-on-19-co-chair-lee-baca-intoxicated-by-the-money-and-hysteria-against-marijuana/>
- [5] Image: <http://twitter.com/home/?status=Scientologist+supporter+Sheriff+Lee+Baca,+intoxicated+by+money+and+hysteria,+makes+rookie+mistakes+in+campaign+agains...+http://xmbg2.th8.us>
- [6] Image: <http://digg.com/submit?url=http://www.drugwarrant.com/2010/09/scientologist-supporter-sheriff-lee-baca-intoxicated-by-money-and-hysteria-makes-rookie-mistakes-in-campaign-against-marijuana/&title=Scientologist+supporter+Sheriff+Lee+Baca,+intoxicated+by+money+and+hysteria,+makes+rookie+mistakes+in+campaign+agains...>
- [7] Image: <http://www.facebook.com/share.php?u=http://www.drugwarrant.com/2010/09/scientologist-supporter-sheriff-lee-baca-intoxicated-by-money-and-hysteria-makes-rookie-mistakes-in-campaign-against-marijuana/&t=Scientologist+supporter+Sheriff+Lee+Baca,+intoxicated+by+money+and+hysteria,+makes+rookie+mistakes+in+campaign+agains...>
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