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Alfred McCoy: We spend thousands of dollars a year per person to be in prison, and we can't afford it. Now built it up to the point where it's really getting to be a cost that the majority of society can no longer sustain, and the irrationality is being brought out now. I think getting to the point where we're willing to have a discussion about this. But it had to be pushed to this absolutely absurd limit. Okay?

John Malpede: Yeah, last night, David Fratello was here who the campaign manager behind Prop. 36. And he had a more- I guess he had, on one hand a more hopeful, point of view, which was the, that the people of California were out in front of the legislators and now that their voice had been clearly heard- maybe exactly for the reasons you just said- you know, which was like the absurd cost- that the legislators would be willing to go along with that, you know- as they go along with the public opinion, that actually is up front. The other thing you just said, going back to something Sandra said at the beginning of this conversation- he said the biggest lobby in the United States- in California of any kind, was the Prison Guard's Lobby. That they gave more money not only on this- not only to stop that proposition, but generally across the board- than any other lobby in the State of California.

Sandra Alvarez: From 1982 to 1994 there were 20 new Prisons built, and only one University.

Alfred McCoy: I mean, although you can say it sounds, you know- funny, but it's actually true. Prisons tend to be concentrated in remote locations where you got Congressional Representative, State Legislators. They are very important- they are a disproportionately important industry and source of and employment in marginal rural areas, they have- therefore the Prison Guards are influential people in their communities, they are highly organized, they have a strong morale, they have a strong identity, very tight. They have a clear interest- they want to keep the Prison; they want to keep the Industry expanding. They have a disproportionate influence over State Legislatures and Congressman in rural districts. And they are a very substantial Lobby. They are a Very substantial Lobby. And through this whole process they've become even more so, than what they were 20 years ago.

John Malpede: Sandra, I wanted to ask you- when we talked on the phone awhile ago, a month ago (whenever it was) you said your work was targeting certain Congressional Districts throughout the United States with the Representatives, where the swing voters are important. [You are targeting] committees involved that would affect policies, so who are, where are those Districts, who are those important swing votes- and what are you, specifically what are you doing in your work? Because you obviously have a big strategy for doing something.

Sandra Alvarez: Well, as you saying the main component of the program is doing speaking tours, doing more education to talk about the situation in Columbia, bringing Columbians to talk about the situation um, into uh, Districts. We've done just the first-half of the Districts and are now trying to establish the next half- which are another ten. But, we're just going to try to see what all the re-configurations are. Last November we went on a speaking tour with the Former Governor of Elchecho<?>, which is a state on the western, north-western coast of Columbia, that is 90% Afro-Columbian. So it was

really interesting to have these conversations about the Drug War, you know- how was the drug aid to Columbia going to affect Afro-Columbians, and how is the Drug War affecting African-Americans here. A little tangent, but it was, it was an important speaking tour. The Districts that we had come up with were- the specific ones- um, were a little further south- Representative Cox in Orange Country and that area. and Northern California- I mean, was that what you wanted to know? The thing is, the Committees and places that we're looking are the Former Corporations, the Drug Policy Committee, Sub-Committee um, which has a really long name, I can't remember it all, but also includes Drug Policy, um, the Defense Policy and those types of places. So- I'm getting tongue-tied, there are over five-hundred representatives so to explain how we only chose twenty- is, is- it was a long process to choose them. But the idea behind it was to go educate constituents so they can go pressure their Congressman into changing their votes. Because the aid-package to Columbia was passed through Congress, because most people didn't know what it was. All they heard was "anti-drug", and that's a very politically expedient stance to take in Congress. So, we're going to go into different areas in California, um in Texas, in um, in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut. In Connecticut, we're going to be in the areas where Sigoursky Helicopters make Blackhawks. For the same package, about 400 million dollars is going in Helicopters from Connecticut, from Texas and in Connecticut, the Senator Dodd and Representative Gaginson and Delaro have been very vocal, around Human Rights and Latin America, but because the helicopters are being in their district, they haven't said anything about the situation in Columbia- the Human Rights situation and what the Military will do. So, I hope I answered your question.

JM: I think so. Alexander?

Audience/Alexander: My name is Alexander. And I'm not that educated and I'm not that smart, but I'm not dumb and I'm not stupid. If you catch my drift. I don't know if this is appropriate, I don't know you guys talked some high-powered stuff. Right? And I'm just a real person. I live on skid-row and I got a question. I have been hearing you guys talking about the War on Drugs, this high-powered War on Drugs, and Prison, and the Schools and all this kind of stuff, right. But I got a question that I just wanted you to ask, right? Now they've been talking about having a War on Drugs. I would like to know if you guys could answer the question, I don't know if you guys are capable of answering the question or not, but it's just a question that's in my mind, but when I walk into the community that I live at, right around the corner from the Police Station is a known dope spot. That's two-blocks away. They have people over there selling dope on a non-stop basis- a known drug spot. I mean, you can walk over there now, and they'll try to sell you crack. And they smoke crack, and you know, it's like a Drug-Selling Immune Zone. They got another spot on 5th Street, 5th and Gladys or 5th and one of them streets- Towne Street. It's another Drug Immune Zone. You just come there and set up shop, start selling crack. Police don't come, but nobody bother you. You sell all the crack you got, you sell all the crack you want to sell, and the Police ride up and down Towne Street all the time- and nobody, nobody does nothing! And it's baffling me like- and they talking about the War on Drugs- I know they know it, because they're smarter than me, and I'm not that smart. So, you know- I just want to know, I don't know, I don't know if you guys can explain it or not: But, how could that situation like that be going on year after year after year after year? Right around the corner from the Police Department?! Known drug spots.

JM: Are there any windows- how many windows are in that Police Department?

Aud #2: Can I add a little addendum to his story? I lived at 4th and Wall, right by where he's talking about and we had a loft with a garden on top of it. And somebody had planted a couple of Marijuana seeds in the loft, the garden or something, and there was knock down on the door from a couple of Police: "We see you got some plants growing up there." "No. No we don't. No, we don't." "Yeah, you do. You got a couple little ones. Blah, blah, blah." Nobody believed them and all that stuff. And they said: "We'll give you week", and they came back and knocked and said: "If they're still there, you know- we gotta pull them up", and we went up and there were just a couple seedlings, like maybe three. But the thing is, there's a Heli-pad, um-

Aud #3: What's a 'Heli-pad'?

Aud #2: It's where heli- there's a uh- it's where Helicopter's land.

Aud #3: Oh.

Aud #2: And the Police Station, by where he's talking 5th and Wall and we're right there and the Police Station was right there, they would fly right over with infra-red cameras, and spot these iddy-biddy things. And uh, but allow this stuff to go on. I thought that was funny.

JM: You want to talk to Alexander's question?

Sandra Alvarez: I- if, if any of you've been to San Francisco, I work on 16th and Mission and you know, we're sort of passing by and watching those, those things going on, too. You know, so, you know- I see it all the time. When I first got there, the San Francisco Chronicle said: "16th & Mission: Marketplace of Heroin." I had to hide it from my parents, you know. Because- but, I can't answer that question. I know that, we at Global Exchange aren't calling the Police when we're seeing those transactions happening, because we know the War on Drugs is, is ineffective, is racist, it's not looking at the real reasons: why are people selling drugs? Why are people buying drugs? You know, there are a lot of economic and social reasons behind that, and that's what, what is not happening. So, I think the Police know that it's going to happen, no matter what. There's too much profit in it for not to happen. And so they kind of let it happen. Every once on a while they go into a big show, maybe- you know. I occasionally see the cops chilling at McDonalds, while people selling crack go down the street to Capp<?> and 16th.

Alexander: So, what you're telling me is that the War on Drugs is a smokescreen.

Sandra Alvarez: That's what I believe.

Alexander: Now, that's interesting.

Sandra Alvarez: I mean, they do. I mean... We were talking about that earlier. I do think it's a smokescreen. They are something's, they're just not doing it everywhere, all the time. I mean, I don't know, I don't know. They found her Pot, Man.

Aud #2: They have the technology.

Sandra Alvarez: You know, you know- so, they are doing something. I don't know- I mean, I can't really answer that.

Alexander: What about you Sir? Do you have any explanation? What do you think about that?

Alfred McCoy: The arrests have been phenomenal. The convictions are tremendous, but of course- the percentage of those convicted is a tiny percentage of those believed to be both Users and Sellers. It's a vast industry in the United States. And it can't be broken down even domestically- even with our own borders. Even under the conditions of the Drug War. Even after the massive expansion of our Police. Even after a rigorous posture of law enforcement which has done real damage to the Constitution. The Fourth Amendment under an illegal Search and Seizure has been essentially damaged. This whole idea of confiscating property uh, automobiles and houses- without due process- they don't have to go for a trial. Let's say okay- you're driving down the street and you have a Marijuana cigarette, they've got to prosecute you before they can send you to jail. They can take your car and sell it without any due process. They just decide, that that has been used and that is the basis for taking away your property. Now- when the State can take away your Property without due process, that's a very substantial threat to Liberty- second only to the threat to Individual Personal Liberty of Freedom, okay. They can do two things to me: They can send me to jail, or they can take away my property, alright? Sending me to jail is worse, but taking away my property is pretty bad. So, the Drug War has done substantial damage to the Constitution. The costs that we have paid for it domestically has been very high- the costs of Prisons, incarceration, alright? It still hasn't stopped it can't stop it. It's beyond the capacity of the State. Why? Because drugs are now uh, about 8% of world trade. Illicit drugs are now about 8% of world trade. Alright it's vast, illicit industry. That's according to the United Nations meeting on drugs in 1998 in New York where they had a big symposium and collective reports and that was their determination.

Alexander: Damn. I want to thank you for that. I mean, opened up some-

Aud #4: May I just ask, what do you suggest as the solution to the problem, or what approach one should take.

Alfred McCoy: I've kicked this around in my mind for along time, and what I've come up is this. First of all, I think that the Drug War is much more of a problem than the Drug Problem. I think in term of social harm, if you evaluate that the harm done to this society, I think the harm done to the Constitution, to the budget for social welfare- of which prison-actually, he cut should be between: Head Start, Colleges and Universities and Prisons- that's our Social Welfare dollar. We're taking away from our schools, we're taking away from our Colleges and Universities, and we're investing into our Prisons. It costs in the State of Wisconsin \$22,000 to send somebody to Fox River Correctional Institute; It costs \$3,000 to go to the University of Wisconsin Medicine. Okay? Seven times more expensive. It's a gross abuse of our priorities. So, I think the first problem we need to address is not the Drug problem, but the Drug War problem. Right? And my own feeling is how do we fix it? Initially, about 10 years ago, when the first critics like William Buckley, and others- surprising critics- said the Drug War isn't working. They

said we ought to legalize. Alright? They've given up on that. Even the most stringent critic has given up on that, because that gets you into a very deep debate. Moreover, we have got International treaties that we signed with the United Nations that require us that to keep drugs illegal. I mean, we have got a U.N. Convention- we've signed a single Convention of narcotic drugs. We are legally bound as a society under treaty to maintain drugs illegal. Let's avoid that, that's enormously difficult. Legalization is an impossibility. You'll have to argue with William Bennett- and people like that. You don't want to do that. That's a waste of time. So, what do you do? What do you do? I think what you do- is simply change the penalty. Alright? Right now the penalty is, if you're caught in possession of Drugs- okay, you have to go to Prison- in almost every state, above a minimal level, alright? Simply change it from- Mandatory Incarceration to Mandatory Treatment. And that solves most of the problem. First of all, it deals with the most serious costs, the social cost of building prisons. Of incarceration persons. So, if you shift from this Drug War model of aggressive pursuit of everyone using and selling drugs and mandatory incarceration of those who are arrested in this sweep of the streets, then you have done, reduced most of the damage. Demobilize the law enforcement establishment. Decriminalize the use, and then you don't have to worry about the issue of legalization. It's actually a fairly simple solution. It would take some minor legislation on the Federal and State level to really change the complexion of the Drug War.

Aud #5: Do any of you believe that the existence of drugs and one of its multi-purposes, but indeed a big purpose in question, can that be equated to what we say about religion as the "Opium of the Masses" and us drugs and be viewed as that, also?

John: You mean, is Opium, the "Opium of the Masses"?

Aud #5: Today, less opium than before, but... Anytime cross anybody's mind, somehow?

John: Is that connected to Alexander's question: 'Why doesn't this neighborhood- the powers that be- ever completely happy, does- let people crack their brains out and not worry about it'? Is that what you're saying?

Aud #5: For me, really- this area of Los Angeles and Skid Row and everything about it is very, very special. It has a very unique existence of its own, and thus immunization perhaps is one of its peculiarities. But, when we live in a world where we see tons and tons and tons of this product, and if, if one understands supply, demand- if you understand that theory- ok, the price goes up, because what? There's a demand higher. OK, demand higher for- is it because of nature, human nature wants it and are we really having fun with it? Is it really wonderful? Then let it be. Let it be, uh- a wonderful life with drugs. Other than that, if we become to agree little by little, perhaps that it is doing a rather negative outcome to, to, to human nature, to quality of existence- and you really want to, to stop, then, then you would think everybody though would, would go for it. And if there have special interest groups that still don't care, they would be very much isolated. But, um, I, I am just ashamed to, to be alive, and confront this, uh- having to come and think about this instead of other things- because in general, drugs to me fall into a major arena of rather anti-life like, not really pro-life um, and I just don't like that, period. And much less dealing with the purpose of, of existence, of giving quality to yourself and your community and, and there's just an obstacle there. Umm. Yeah, there

is this uh, medical part of it. Use it. Sometimes there is mis-use. It has gone...to serve its purpose, and I guess knowledge would, somebody would also say well, these drug's are no good anymore. And this, yeah- for this and that- ok, fine. And another thing too, is, Alcohol is not even to us under the message "Alcohol is a Drug". It's not. And, and which is a drug. And another thing, another thing is, is that uh, I don't need to read too much to come to certain conclusions that, so much drugs coming in, when the final answer has to be why it is allowed to come in. See, it has to be allowed to come in. Not because it's too much that I can stop here but maybe not stop those. No. it is because, if I know that the technology and knowledge has taken us to Pluto and beyond and we can see little things out there so far, how can you not see big ships? <laughter>

John: So, your question is, this question is- what is the level of corruption that allows this to happen?

Aud #5: Yeah, I mean uh, it is like uh, there has to be, of course- it is multi-purpose- I have to agree with that, it serves so many purposes. The greed, and interest groups, and companies doing this and that. But, also for me the worst one which I infer from all this, is, is to really keep uh, as many people just comfortably dumb, numb- sorry. Dumb and Numb. It kind of rhymes,, and so that rally- as intelligent as we are- intelligence being a weapon each of has to use against each other- I think we've reached a point where it's just too much in letting this happen right now. In a way, I'm okay with that, but sometimes we take radical measures for radical times. And that is not so good either. But I just, I just hope to bring a little bit of conscience to this whole thing, because this thing- it really doesn't matter to me much if there is no God, if there is half a God, if there is one God, or multi-Gods. It's really, these actions that we're taking as humans it, it seems that we're doing it without much morality. Really. And that's, uh one of the substances of, of life, for living together in a rather qualitative uh society.

Alfred McCoy: Can I answer the first part of your question? It was an interesting observation. In the last millennium, societies around the globe have had- most societies in most places over the last thousand years have had recreational drug use. Uh, Opium in Asia, Alcohol in the West, Shat<sp?> in East Africa, Beutel<sp?> in Island Southeast Asia, Kava in Melanesia<sp?>. One could go on. Societies across the last millennium- as much as we can find out about them- have had recreational drug abuse. The complexities- why do societies go from use to abuse? And, just off the top of my head, you've raised an interesting question. I think it's in times of social tension and social change- either deep-seated or more superficial- that the, the restraints that keep the use of the, the recreational drug within socially tolerable- what the society deems to be tolerable levels- to levels that the society now regards as abuse that occurs I think, when there's, when there's dramatic change in the society's socio-economic orders, cultures change. And then the question is: "What does the societies do to bring the use away from abuse back down to what are socially acceptable levels?" We're now a society that's for the last hundred years, we've tried this experiment in legal prohibition- a coercive approach. And the coercive approach uh, has been tried in a number of societies in the last half-century. In China under Communism it worked very effectively. China went from having 27% of adult males- maybe more- from being Opium and Heroin addicts, to being virtually wiped out. OK, well that kind of coercion which was a product of the Cold War- is over. Alright? Uh, and I think that we're now moving into an era of a, of a freer global world in which the Authoritarian regimes in the Western Block- uh, the military Authoritarian regimes of the Western Block, the Communist Authoritarian regimes of the

Eastern block- they're gone. We're now into an integrated global world in which we're all moving towards freedom and democracy, and therefore the whole coercive apparatus is- that allowed the drug lord to even have a chance to work- have been all wiped out. And as we move into this era of freedom, the prohibition attempt is not going to work. We've seen in this society how it's failed. And therefore we have to I think move from this century-old experiment in prohibition to something else. Alright? To control what we see as this excess of drug-use.

Aud #5: Thank you.

John: So, perhaps this is good. Anyone have a question they're dying to ask at this point? Okay, Alexander- one statement, and then Sandra- you want to say something?

Alexander: I'd like to say this: To me, it seems like since America doesn't want to confront a problem. It's like Frankenstein's monster turns on, turns on Frankenstein. Frankenstein made the monster, but he couldn't control the monster. So, it's seems like that's happening with America with these drugs, right? And it saddens me; it's my people that are the people being affected by it. Because, cause- I'm Black and I walk down the streets, and I see my homies with, with, with, with- that used to have great potential- living in boxes, walking down the street with silver shit on- excuse me, you know- silver, I don't know what they call those things, they look like ghosts, whatever. Some crazy stuff the missions give em, and The Space Blankets.

Alexander: Space Blankets. Yeah, walking down the street with that stuff on. You know, and the black woman is supposed to be my woman. She's all discombobulated. I can't get with her, cause her mind is all tore up, you know. And you know, and the, and the powers that be, they're saying: "Well, we can't do nothing about this now, so what we're going to do is- we're just going to just put you in drug programs, instead of putting you in jail and confronting the issue, you know." America's most valuable resource is their people, and they're like- well, Technology, these computers- and you know, these high-powered toys that they got is more valuable then the people. You know? That's what it seems to me. And it seems like also that if America, if America doesn't want to do right by their people- you know, that's just like if you got a cancer in your arm, then you say, well- we're just going to ignore this cancer in your arm then the cancer grows to your shoulder, and then it keeps going. Then it consumes your whole body. America cannot live and thrive as a wholesome nation as one of the world's ruling nations, with this major cancer growing in it. And just like the Roman Empire and every other empire and every other living entity, America is doomed to die prematurely if they continue to let this cancer just grow and fester and just turn their eye and say- well, you know come up with this high-power gobbelty-goop to explain what they're not doing- to just ignore the problem. See, so- I'd like to say: "Me- I'm an American. I've never been in Slavery, but I've been in Slavery to Drugs, and I see my people in Slavery to Drugs." And it's the same thing what Moses told Pharoah: "Let my people go." They won't, like what this dude said. It's keeping them asleep. It's keeping the people asleep. America's most valuable resource. America couldn't have got where they got now, if it wasn't for Black people. They built America, and this is the payback that we get. Put em on Cocaine. Pump all these drugs into their system. Get em all tore up on drugs. And then after they get tore up on drugs, then the problem is so bad, there's so much money being made- we don't want to deal with trying to get em off of drugs. There's too much money being made- that's the bottom line. It's too much money being made! So, we're just going to

turn our heads slightly this way- we can still see it through our peripheral vision.. “Oh, that’s what we got drug programs for him.” That’s not going to work. I don’t think that that’s gonna work. That’s not- to me- that’s not an adequate solution. If it was Your people- would You do that to Your people!? If Your people was out there on 5th street running around selling dope and doing all that, if it was in Your neighborhood and Your kids and Your Grandparents all Your people were all tore up on dope, would You be sitting there as snug and pug as you are and giving all these high-powered explanation for the reality what’s going on. Those are just words that you talking about. People’s lives is at stake. People’s Lives. People smoking crack out there right now that got babies in their stomach. Those are Real Lives. And we sitting up in here talking high-powered goobly-bop words trying to explain what we’re not going to do, and why we can’t do it and this is what we’re going to do- and America is dying right out there now. And it saddens me to be a part- of America. It really does. This is what, this, this, this is what we come to.

Sandra: I, personally uh, one of the reasons I’m here is because of the situation out there. I know that um, that I’m in a very privileged position and I can make the choice to live up in San Francisco, I can make the choice to go work in Silicon Valley- but I don’t. You know? Like, I’m sick. But I wanted to come and try and talk and make the connection between what’s going on in Columbia- which is where my family’s from and I can’t go to because I risk uh, I risk my family over there if they know that I’m working on Human Right’s and stuff. And I’m trying to connect it with what’s going on over here. And so, what else can I do? I mean, I’m not really sure what you expect of me- personally. Cause that last part of your, of your comment didn’t sound very positive, which maybe it can’t be because of the situation. But that’s why I’m here- to try and talk about different things, about what’s going on, make connections and bring more people into getting interested in the issues.

John: Yeah, I mean, I think, I think they aren’t two different things. That’s sort of the, that’s sort of the- the deal. This is an area- as you pointed out- this is an area- it’s an area- where no-one gives a damn about the people in this area. And the people in this area- actually, it’s a cleverly you know, socially contrived area. Because people- All the Social Services, for example are in this area, but none of the families or other organic community connections are in this area. So you, as you said, you know: ‘If it was Your people, if it you know, was Your Grand- if Your Grandmother was here- but nobody’s Grandmother Is here, cause in order to be here, you got to be separated from the community you grew up in and all that. So, it sort of happens in a way, in a place where nobody sees it, nobody notices it and that allows it to continue. You know? And that, and that is Really connected to, uh- the human waste, the waste of human lives here is really connected to demonizing somebody in Columbia, putting the problem over there and then disrupting countless lives over there at the same time that you’re, you know not taking care of the lives, you know you should be caring about here.

Aud #6: It’s not just here, though. I want to throw in that like, um you know- it’s very strange that until that gentleman just spoke, like no one spoke about Drug Policy in the way of how- like none of us, including myself, myself here- in terms of how do you deal with someone that you care about who is taking drugs. And like, if our society’s Policy isn’t based on how do you deal with someone you care about who’s taking drugs and that’s not our society’s Drug Policy, then our Drug Policy is how to deal with people you Don’t care about, and probably about how to deal with people you hate, you demonize,

you're willing to shoot, you're willing to put in jail and everything else. And that's why we have the Drug Policy that looks like the one we do, right? Because our Drug Policy is written for people to take care of people they don't care about. And that's a serious problem. And so instead like, our Drug policy, our Drug policy gets wrapped up in like, all the ways that we don't care about people. Right? So, it's not like how do you take someone in, how do you provide them with a space, how do you, how do you care for them, how do you look at their situation and decide, you know: "Are drugs acting as something that's bringing them down, that's isolating them, that's not making them not able to see things? Or are drugs acting as a way, you know in which they're surviving in an oppressive environment and you have to challenge that impression instead. Or are drugs acting as something that you know, is providing escape and meaning and everything else and we need to do more work in our society to build more like, meaning into our communities and into our lives and into not having lives that are so empty and so corporatized and so built into so many forms of hatred-

Alfred McCoy: At the same time though, you know- I agree with that- but, at the same time, the Drug War is doing all kinds of damage. Let me give you one example of that. The "Sentencing Project" in D.C.-

Aud #6: Can I say the last part of what I was going to say? Cause it was actually about like, where the Drug War does damage. So that like, where the Drug War does, is doing that damage, and not surprisingly that damage is being distributed in exactly the other places where big chunks of our society are going to war anyway. So, that the Drug War is affecting communities of color because the people executing the Drug War- whether it's people doing social services agency planning sometimes in terms of like who gets what kinds of money, and what schools get funded and what schools get under funded- or its people who are the Police and the Cops and the Prisons in this society already are at War with people of color, and so they take on the Drug War and they use that to carry out exactly the War that they were already in. So, it seems- you know like, that's one example. But, it seems to me if we want to stop the death and destruction that's promoted by the Drug War, then what we need to stop these other Wars that the Drug War gets used as a weapon For. We need to stop the War you know, that Racism is in society. We need to stop the War, that the idea- that the United States should control all the entire world's resources is all up and down Latin America and the Drug War is getting used as a tool in that, right? In Columbia, it's like- front line- because it's a useful tool in, in part to get Columbia's resources, but we have to stop not just the Drug War in Columbia as it's being carried out, we have to stop the war that's based on the idea that the United States goes and steals the resources of the entire hemisphere. When we do those things, then the symptoms- the death, the destruction, the taking away of the Constitution- all that else that's wrapped up in the problems of the Drug War goes down. And so like, I feel like that the Drug War is a really important front, but it's only successful in taking it down when our fighting it is linked to stopping all these other Wars that are destructive to our own humanity.

Alfred McCoy: One of the long-term damages that this hopefully, uh soon-to-be-extinct Drug War is going to leave us with- uh, the last time I looked, and the figure goes up, every once in awhile the Sentencing Project in D.C. issues a statement that gets picked up by the Press- last time I looked I think it was 34% African-American males between the ages of 18-32 are in the Criminal Justice System, that is to say under arrest, on parole or in prison. Alright? Now, in most states you lose your civil rights when you have a

Felony conviction on your record. And what we're seeing now is in fact, the political disenfranchisement of a whole generation of African-Americans as a consequence of the drug war, I'm sorry, a substantial share of an entire generation of African-Americans. That will not go away once the Drug War is over.

John: And even that abuse is being abused. Because, like in Florida you know, there are, there are people- many African-Americans with No, any record in the criminal justice system- I was reading in the paper today about a Minister, a Minister who they weren't going to let vote for that reason. So it's the abuse piled on abuse piled on abuse.

Alfred McCoy: That's why I think that decriminalizing the Drug War is a, is a step is a very important first step. Because the Criminalization process has countless consequences: Damage to the Constitution, Wastes money- throws it down the rat hole of prisons- and permanently gives a substantial number of people a Felony Conviction which they, you know in any rational social policy don't deserve, don't need- and disenfranchises them for the rest of their lives. One of the things I'm surprised about in my, in my relation with the American Black Caucus that they have never raised this issue. And this has never come up. I've often felt that they've just in the long-term interest they haven't embraced this with the seriousness it deserves. They're losing their constituency very fast in the Drug War.

Aud # 7: Thanks for your point of view. I've been to so many things of this nature over the years in Los Angeles and other places. And so, I apologize to Columbia for the United State's involvement there, but I've seen Nicaraguans, Salvadorians, Iraqis- you name it, you know- come to us and say: "Help us stop what your country is doing." So, I think that the Drug War has been fabulously successful with the visionaries that run this country, you know- what this gentleman was saying about controlling resources in the hemisphere. Of course. But, on the home front here um, we're no longer a society of workers really. There were once Bolsheviks, Communists, Socialists, Trade Unionists in the United States in the '20's and the 30's and before that. Now, those things have virtually disappeared. In the service dot com economy, investor economy. People living in the street- I do think the Drug War is designed you know, and the government's visionaries have seen the effects of the '60's when drugs were really very popular and became proliferated in our society, and I think the effect was really studied. And it dawned on me at one time, the government really likes to have people on drugs and alcohol and because it's easier, yes- as people say- it's the opium of the people. To control people. You know, I think Nationalism is rapidly disappearing in this country and other countries. When you talk about the fall of the Eastern Bloc- all those countries. Yeah, those are just systems, you know that fail for one reason or another.