

Answered July 31/56  
in lauphaud  
LH

VOGEL

Box 97  
Terminal Island, California

July 25, 1956

Lawrence Kolb, M. D.  
6645 - 32nd Street, N. W.  
Washington 15, D. C.

Dear Dr. Klob:

Thank you very much for your note of July 21. I have read your article in the Saturday Evening Post with great interest. It is about time someone ventured to disagree openly with public opinion as it has been formulated for years by the Bureau of Narcotics. As a retired officer you can get by with it, where someone still on active duty could not. I have repeatedly antagonized the people at Headquarters by daring to question Mr. Anslinger's opinions. At least one Assistant Surgeon General, who has responsibility over the two narcotic hospitals, believes with Mr. Anslinger that not one single heroin addict has ever been cured, and thinks that the operation of our two hospitals is a nuisance imposed by Congress.

There is a lot of newspaper publicity in Southern California about addiction, especially among juveniles. It was recently reported that one Junior High School in the harbor area had 40 arrests for narcotics in a month. When I investigated I found it true that 40 boys were on probation, but all for experimenting with marihuana. It's impossible, of course, to tell to what extent statistics are based on fact and to what extent narcotic statistics refer to marihuana.

I think the new law which was passed since your article was written is a big step backward and I say so whenever I have an opportunity, but Headquarters has "discouraged" me from voicing my opinions. I am speaking to the Medical Correctional Association meeting in Los Angeles next month in conjunction with the American Prison Congress, and expect to let my hair down. I accepted the invitation on condition that I could speak informally without manuscript so that I would not have to worry a manuscript through Headquarters' clearance. I suppose some boys under 18 will be sent to jail for life for selling or sharing their heroin with other juveniles under 18, and others to prison for 5 years for similar marihuana offenses. The treatment of addicts as probationers, which has proved to be the most satisfactory at our two hospitals, will no longer be possible for all cases convicted of selling. One result undoubtedly will be that juries will let offenders go scot free rather than convict them and subject them to life or long sentences. An enlightened system of probation and suspended sentence, which has become a characteristic

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of American justice, is being suspended in this area because a few people created some public panic.

When it looked as if 20-year retirement might be possible I made some inquiries as to State jobs, which explains the letter you got from the Department of Mental Hygiene. Dr. Rapaport was looking for a deputy to work with the State hospitals. I don't know whether the job is still open or not. Dr. Fuller will be retiring in about 2 years and Dr. King in about 3 years, and I am not available for 4 years unless the law is changed. For practice I took an examination several months ago for Chief Medical Officer, State Correctional System. This refers to the Chief Medical Officers for the individual institution, not the over-all State job. I passed it and my eligibility will be good for another 3 years or so.

We are still in the dark here about the new Surgeon General-- I sincerely hope it will be someone who has what it takes to rebuild the Service morale-wise.

Virginia is in the mountains for a 2-weeks vacation, one of the boys is in summer school, and another one is working temporarily at the Long Beach Post Office.

With best personal regards to all of your family,

Sincerely,

  
Victor H. Vogel, Medical Director

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Be sure to see page 8<sup>4</sup>  
7 newswave July 30.