

## High on Hemp?

March 29, 2018

Hemp is not marijuana.

And yet it is.

Earlier this week, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced he will introduce legislation to legalize industrial hemp.

He is not concerning himself with marijuana, which is what we call the plant *Cannabis sativa* when cultivated for its Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content, the principal chemical in the plant that



A complicating factor is that industrial hemp contains an oil, Cannabidiol (CBD), which is neither an ecstatic nor a hallucinogenic drug, but is widely believed to have many therapeutic powers.

makes it ideal for “recreational” uses. Industrial hemp is *Cannabis sativa*, too, just with minuscule THC.

Hemp products are actually legal to buy and sell in the United States.

Sort of.

But growing it is murky, considering that *ingestible*

hemp is a Schedule 1 drug no matter how little THC it has — despite the fact that Congress has allowed states to regulate the growth of low-THC hemp for “industrial” purposes.

A complicating factor is that industrial hemp contains an oil, Cannabidiol (CBD), which is neither an ecstatic nor a hallucinogenic drug, but is widely believed to have many therapeutic powers. And is widely sold all over the country, wherever states have allowed for medical marijuana.

Nevertheless the DEA objects to it as much as to THC, saying that *all* ingestible forms of hemp are illegal.

Because of all this murkiness, McConnell’s bill might seem to be welcome step towards clarity.

Trouble is, since industrial hemp is indistinguishable from cannabis *with* THC — to look at; to smell; to touch — officials hoping to crack down on marijuana-as-a-psychoactive-drug would be much hampered were industrial hemp commonly and legally grown.

What a mess. The only real solution is to de-list *all* forms of *Cannabis sativa* from the War on Drug’s Schedule of Drugs It Unconstitutionally Proscribes.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.