

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

Let American farmers grow industrial hemp.

In this World War II-era Hemp for Victory film, the United States Department of Agriculture promotes domestic industrial hemp growing, to serve the war effort. The Agriculture Department already knew at the time about industrial hemp's tremendous benefits, and the government should not backpeddle about that now. A sad result of the federal and state governments' drug war is that domestic industrial hemp-growing is banned, lest a hemp farmer or intruder be so silly as to seek a high from the trace amount of THC found in hemp grown for industrial purposes. Consequently, Canada and China welcome the additional profits from exporting hemp fiber, paper, finished products and sterile seeds for such products as clothing, shoes, vegan lip balm, and food (check out the tasty hemp granola and hemp cheese at natural food stores). The multifaceted beneficial industrial uses of hemp are conceded even on the USDA's website. Plenty of American farmers who have no interest in selling or obtaining marijuana highs want to produce industrial hemp, but the federal government continues saying no. Fortunately, two North Dakota farmers have filed a federal lawsuit to enable domestic industrial hemp production. They are David Monson, a Republican member of the state legislature; and Wayne Hauge, who is a farmer, accountant, and non-smoker. They are represented by the following two establishment-appearing lawyers, with their establishment bona fides making sense, because industrial hemp is not about getting high or even getting medicine: Joseph Sandler, a District of Columbia lawyer who previously worked with the Democratic National Committee and was a partner at one of D.C.'s largest law firms; and Timothy Purdon, who is with a forty-five lawyer North Dakota law firm, which I would guess constitutes a large law firm for as sparsely-populated a state as North Dakota (approximate population of 636,000). This industrial hemp lawsuit is *Monson, et al. v. Drug Enforcement Administration, et al.*, U.S. Dist. Ct. (D. N.D.) Civ. No. 4:07-cv-00042-DLH-CSM. I have downloaded, but not yet read, the following key case document filings: the docket; the Complaint; the government's Motion to Dismiss legal memorandum; and the Plaintiffs' memorandum supporting summary judgment and opposing the government's motion to dismiss. Oral argument is set for November 14, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in the Bismarck federal court. This litigation battle for the right to grow domestic industrial hemp follows an earlier federal court win by hemp product manufacturer David Bronner to permit industrial hemp imports. Jon Katz. **ADDENDUM:** Thanks to Mark Godsey for blogging on this story. Additional background information on this case is [here](#).

Posted by Jon Katz in Drugs at 00:00