

'Try drug pushers as traitors'—Georgia state

In a new escalation in the fight against drugs and organized crime in Atlanta, Georgia State Senator Culver Kidd (D-Midgewille), has introduced legislation calling for a minimum \$250,000 bond—going as high as \$1 million—to be placed against those convicted as drug pushers; changing sentencing to impose a minimum of five years imprisonment, while making a distinction between drug pushers and users; and urging enactment of a federal law that would enable drug pushers to be prosecuted as traitors and charged with treason against the United States. Testifying in support of his measures to stop the transport and use of drugs in this country, as well as abroad, Senator Kidd said:

First, I would like to read you a couple of the many, many letters that I have received since notification was carried in the news media concerning this meeting here today. I am sure that the feeling of most of the people of Georgia and really the United States, is pictured in the words of these two letters. . . .

I also would like to call to your attention the letters that I have received from some of our senators and congressmen in Washington. I am sure they recognize the problem and know that positive steps must be taken in order to change the direction in which our country is continuing to go, when it comes to dealing with drugs and drug users.

Of all the letters that I have received, I had only one that criticized the proposal that we study the possibility of trying for *treason* the pushers that we have throughout this country and other countries that are causing the drug problem. Of all things this adverse editorial ran in my own paper, the *Union Recorder*, and I would like to read it to you, so you can see just how some of the minds of our news media run, and what their thinking might be about those that are trying to do something and accomplish something for the best interest of all of us.

Over a million Georgia citizens have already taken a stand against the continued growth of drug abuse. These citizens have signed petitions stating that they want something done, something needs to be done, and let's get it done. As this problem reaches younger and younger children, the determination of our citizens to stop drugs will grow greater and greater. In recent months I have seen and heard evidence that what used

to be an abstract fear for the welfare of one's own child turned into a specific conviction that our whole social structure is now in jeopardy! Regardless of how the child is ultimately exposed to drugs—whether he gets them from a friend or buys them from a neighborhood peddler—the one on top of the chain of supply is the professional pusher, who in conspiracy with counterparts in other countries and every state in our country, arranges for the smuggling and distribution of illegal and harmful drugs that eventually filter down to our children. It is a known fact that over 3,000 major drug pushers have been caught in this country, arrested, yet they have escaped any type of sentencing and have left the country. They are now the major pushers in other countries, such as Colombia and Jamaica. This conscientious conspiracy to undermine the welfare of an entire generation is nothing less, to me, than treason and the *perpetrator* can rightfully be called a *traitor to his country and to our people*. I dare say that in all of our history, those tried for a treason act seemed relatively undramatic, when compared to the thousands of young lives, and billions of our national wealth, that are going down the drain, to the personal benefit of the drug pushers and their organizations.

I have already noted a startled reaction to the term treason. I am open to suggestions for a better word to describe the depraved leech who preys on the most important resource we have to assure continuation and improvement of our way of life—our children! I am open to suggestions for a better word to describe the organized criminal faction that creates the need to divert millions of dollars of our national resources to treat and rehabilitate victims, to enforce the narcotic drug laws, to pay for losses sustained through drug-related crime. I am open to suggestions for a better word for the animal who sustains his criminal empire on the lives of children, the misery of disrupted family happiness, the helpless fear of entire communities, and in fact the welfare of the entire country in which he seems to operate with relative impunity. Whatever words you offer me must reflect the growing concern of everyone to whom I speak. It must identify this *despicable* crime at a level of extreme crisis that deserves extreme measures. It is the intent of this hearing to establish the basis for governmental response to that concern.

senator

I have no ready panacea to offer. However, I hope what is said here today, what is offered as testimony to the existence of a threat to our country, will be the trigger for a chain reaction at all levels and branches of government—from the grass roots to the White House—to take a positive stand, to give the threat its rightful priority, and in recognizing the magnitude of the threat of drug abuse—declare war! For war it is; there would be no hesitation to declare war on an enemy who threatened to annihilate our children and destroy our homes. There would be no leniency for that invader; and there would be apologies if we impose the concept of individual freedom at the expense of the welfare of the society.

I would like to see this hearing address itself to possible solutions to the overall problems of the growing availability of drugs to our children, and how to stop it. I would like to see this hearing emerge as the confirmation that our system can be responsive to its citizens, and that they, as always, can successfully overcome any threat or challenge to the American way of life.

I would like to know your feelings in three major areas: (1) Is not our bail system today terrible? Should we not put into law that anyone that is found to be a pusher, and let me state pusher, that the minimum bond would be \$250,000.00—and possibly should go as high as a million dollars. We know that raising the money for bonds, regardless of the size, is very easy for the big pusher. Nevertheless, small bonds are being placed today on those pushers that our law enforcement officers have taken months and yes, even years to catch, only to find that they are back on the streets hardly before the ink dries on the warrant. (2) Change our method of sentencing. It is spelled out today from zero to five years, or whatever number of years it might be, we are dealing with zero up. I think the law should be changed to five to 25 years. If this be true, then no judge could sentence someone for one year or even less, even though they were found to be a pusher. Let me again state that, by pusher, I am not talking about some young person that has been asked to go and buy a bag of marijuana, and come back and sell it. I am talking about the higher-ups, those that are dealing on the large scale, those that in most cases have connections in foreign countries and are a definite conspiracy

to bring in these drugs by airplane, boat, or any other method that they find to be successful. (3) Calling upon our Congress to consider the idea of charging drug pushers with treason. This would have to be a federal act and not a state act. To me, I am hoping that the feeling will be brought out here today, and the evidence that will be given to you, will make you agree with me, that treason is a sure way to go in dealing with the drug pushers. Attention should be focused by Congress on what they have accomplished in Mexico. For many years, over 95 percent of the heroin that was shipped into this country came from Mexico. Our government has given them food to grow to replace their money crop—heroin. This has proven to be very successful. On the other hand, as I stated earlier, we have not made the same move or had the same success with Colombia and Jamaica. We need to see if these countries would not change their main money crop from drugs to agriculture. I am sure we all will agree that if this country of ours, our state, has lost the will to fight, then certainly we have lost the fight. However, I see no sign of that in the heavy mail that I have been receiving and the many telephone calls that have been directed to me concerning the interest of the people of this state in the drug problem. I see no sign of that, in the over a million Georgians who have already petitioned for action. I see no sign of that in the smouldering resentment on the majority of the public to the manipulation of the justice system by these criminal vampires who escape incarceration through closable loopholes in our sentence structure. I see no sign of a lack of will in our various enforcement organizations who work against overwhelming odds in a frustrating attempt to stop trafficking—only to see the criminal set free or escape his deserved punishment. I see no sign of quitting on the part of those who have been touched by drug-related tragedies. What is lacking is a vehicle to bring the voice of the concerned majority of the American citizenry into focus, so that it can drown out the loud minority who would have us believe that the drug culture can be assimilated into our society without serious harm. It is my hope, and I am sure it is each one of your hope here today, that this hearing will provide the launching point for similar millions of concerned people in other states to join hands and support a massive drive to stop drugs at its source.

I thank you.

—State Senator Culver Kidd
Dem., Milledgeville