

## COCA AND TOBACCO ARE SACRED PLANTS NOT NARCOTICS

Only ignorant people think that Coca leaf is synonymous with 'Cocaine', this is as silly as categorizing grapes as Alcoholic', an artificial process is required to achieve the altered end product in both cases, I can say the same for Tobacco, traditionally tobacco was NOT smoked recreationally nor mixed with other substances (such as in cigarettes), non-indigenous people embarked on the bad habit of smoking mixed and un-mixed tobacco for 'fun' and when they reaped the "rewards" for abusing a holy plant by dying of lung cancer - they decided to blame the plant and black-list it, instead of blaming their own stupidity.

The Coca plant is also a holy plant to the Indigenous peoples of the Americas (the Andes specifically), and Coca leaf is quite possibly the greatest natural medicine on Earth, one can chew the leaf in its natural state and benefit from any number of it's positive natural ingredients including calcium and vitamins B1, B2 & B3 (among others), a handful of leaves (I proved it myself) prevents you from feeling hungry or tired for the duration of a day- an essential component in the lives of people who cannot afford to eat 3 square meals per day and sit behind a desk in an air-conditioned office, these people know what real hard work is all about, doing manual labour 7 days a week in the sun, wind and rain to provide a basic subsistence for themselves and their families. Scientifically there are absolutely no narcotic effects from the Coca leaf in its natural state, and for certain countries (such as the USA) to categorize a poor indigenous farmer of Coca plants in the same category as drug dealers and terrorists - is not only un-scientific, but legally invalid and morally repugnant. Certain countries have even succeeded in having the United Nations put Coca leaf on the #1 List of prohibited substances along with Heroine, Cocaine, etc. The Bolivian government is lobbying hard to correct this error in judgment - which is utterly lacking in any scientific basis whatsoever. I was shocked in a private meeting I had with government officials to listen to a great orator and Indigenous lady Senator - Leonida Zurita Vargas of the Government of President Evo Morales Ayma tell me about the arrests and massacres of poor Indians in Bolivia that she personally survived - under previous non-indigenous regimes for the simple "crime" of growing Coca plants, and explain how her US visa was revoked because she entered the USA with Coca leaves (not Cocaine) and was categorized as a 'drug trafficker', no attention was paid to the fact that Prominent American Universities had paid to bring her to the USA to give lectures with indisputable scientific data about the harmless Coca leaf.

President Morales has also been a victim of government directed brutality and imprisonment for defending the ancient and inseparable cultural right of Andean Indians to grow Coca plants at the hands of previous Conservative Party Governments of the wealthy elite. Yet the Coca Cola company of the USA imports several tonnes of Coca leaves every week from Bolivia - and they are allowed to because it is a harmless raw material and ingredient for their multi-billion dollar and most famous global American export.

I hope you can see the injustice and double standards by now. I can tell you with utter confidence and in all honesty - that the Peaceful Indigenous revolutionary government of President Evo Morales Ayma is neither communist nor narco-trafficking and is more capable of governing this country than any administration in history to have survived the European occupation of the Americas.

*Damon Gerard Corrie  
Writing from La Paz, Bolivia  
damoncorrie@yahoo.com*