**KENT JONES INTERVIEW**

**(Sizzle Reel\_2nd File)**

**TRANSCRIPT**

**15:04:51 – M/S**

Kent: Well, I mean, the uh... Okay, that’s a question I really don’t want to answer. Okay...

INT: Answer it any way you want.

Kent: Well, I need to speak to my attorney about that one. So... because uh... I’m on record as saying one thing, you know, and so I don’t know that I want to stray far from that number.

INT: Do you feel comfortable saying just what’s on record?

K: Well that’s not nearly as impressive as the reality. (Laughs) And so uh... So uh... I could, you know, I had fields strung out all over the state, you know, I grew thousands of plants. And so uh... yeah, I need to speak with Rick about all that.

(Cameraman asks Interviewer to move closer to the camera. He moves.)

K: There’s a law now you know, and it has been for about 20 years about lying to a federal agent. If you lie to a federal agent, you know, you can get thrown in prison for that. So you know, I’d like to speak with- Let’s try and work around that.

INT: What was the biggest effect that growing cannabis had on your life?

**15:06:38 – W/S**

K: Oh, well I mean, I made a fortune, you know. I made millions of dollars. you know, the uh... it was- I was, without it I was gonna be a logger, you know. I can remember when I was a kid, I would see the guys who worked for the State Highway Department, you know, running a back hoe or you know, flagging or something, and I would go, “God, how did they get those great jobs?” You know, because you know for a kid from Days Creek, there’s only you know there’s only one place you’re going. You’re either going to Vietnam and then when you get back you’re gonna be a logger. Like my older brother, you know. So uh... you know you’re gonna set chokers until you’ve been on a job long enough to run CAT(?). Uh, I can remember when I was logging, my brother was running, running CAT, and I was standing up on the cut bank with my boss, and my boss told me something, he said, “Hey, you play your cards right, and pretty soon we’ll have you up on a machine like that.” And the second he said it, it struck me like a rock. Yeah, if I didn’t play my cards right I was gonna end up doing that. That wasn’t, it wasn’t what I wanted. And so you know, I wasn’t a worldly guy as a teenager. And uh, and so when I see these guys come up and I learn the basics on how to grow marijuana with them and then I watch them make you know, maybe not millions of dollars for them at that point in time, but you know, remember this is 1970, ’71, you know and these guys are making a couple hundred thousand dollars. Well that’s, you know, that was a lot of money back then. And so you know I’m like going, well if these guys- Pshh, I can do this, and I’ll do it in a big way. I’ll go out and uh... you know, I won’t do it as a hobby. I’ll do it 12 hours/day. So... you know, yeah it changed my life dramatically. You know...

**15:08:46**

INT: Tell me about getting busted.

**15:08:50 – M/S**

K: The first time? Or the... The first time I got busted for my role in a 100 ton conspiracy when we got uh... there was 2 ships, the Valkry(?) and the USS Potomac, which had been Roosevelt’s vessel during WWII, kind of his presidential yacht, and then Elvis ended up with it, he bought it after they decommissioned it or something. Turned it into a party barge, and then it got busted at Fisherman’s Wharf along with a boat called the Valkrey(?). And you know, in a 20 ton smuggle, uh, we were all charged with a 100 tons for the numerous trips that you know had happened prior to that. Uh... Then uh, everybody kind of went to pri- You know- The three main guys went to prison. Back- Laws were a lot different then. And uh, today everybody would have went to prison. There’s like 40 or 50 people got arrested and uh, but back then it was just, uh just the top 2 or 3 guys went. I was just, I was a youngster, I was only- I think I was 7th in culpability in the case. So uh, but that set the local authorities on to me in the Douglas County area, you know. And after that they spent a lot of time and energy on me... you know, uh... they didn’t have anything to do with my first arrest, but they had plenty to do with my second one.

INT: How long did they investigate you, when did they bust you, and how long were you sent away for?

**15:10:36 – M/S**

K: I just got out of uh, of federal prison in May of this year. I did, I did 9 years, I got the 2-point reduction that was, that just came down through Congress and that let me out a little early. Um... So um, what was the first part of the question?

INT: How long did they investigate you and when did they bust you?

**15:11:09 – C/U**

K: Oh yeah, my investigation was uh, 29 years, and uh... and it was... It was pretty steady, it was a pretty steady 29-year investigation.

INT: Let’s start again. Who was investigating you for 29 years?

**15:11:28 – C/U**

K: Well uh, I was being investigated by numerous agencies. The Oregon Department of Revenue, the Douglas County Sheriff’s Department, they really pushed and pushed all the agencies. You know the FBI investigated me throughout that time, too. Um... Uh... There was- I quit reading the discovery at 40-some thousand pages of discovery in the case, you know. There was hundreds and hundreds of pages of the contents of my garbage, you know. Hard to read that. So, but I mean it was, yeah it was a very long investigation. It seemed like a lot of time and money to put in on a non-violent pot guy, you know. All those years I was out there growing pot, you know, there’s meth guys, meth cooks all over the place and the Douglas County sheriffs never seemed to care about them, you know, they were after the pot guys. I don’t know what it was, it was more- It was like elk hunters or something. They felt like it was a bigger deal for them to bust a pot guy and then uh... plus my attorney had told me that law enforcement, that usually all the big money is with the pot guys. And so uh, my attorney felt that that was why law enforcement always focused on marijuana opposed to the harder, more dangerous drugs is because you know, they- They probably weren’t gonna bust guy who was involved in, say, methamphetamine, they probably weren’t gonna get millions in assets from that guy. You know. Whereas with the pot guys, that’s where all the assets lie. So... you know. That might have been a motivating factor but I don’t know, I’m not inside the heads of the guys, you know, who were after me. I had, you know, in the, in that area, in Roseburg, I lived in Roseburg then which is just north of Days Creek, about 30 miles, and you know we all knew each other, we golfed in the Scramble(?) on Fridays together, and so it was like, you know. So most of these uh... these law enforcement guys, I mean I maybe didn’t hang out with them but we all knew each other, you know.

**15:13:53 (cont.)**

They knew who I was, I knew who they were. And uh, so over, you know, over the years I did some things, you know, where I kind of mocked them or you know, when they were following me I would lose them and then I’d go you know jump in behind them and follow them. And I did that a couple of times. And so you know, that wasn’t very smart on my part. You know, by all I did was make, you know, some enemies that spent, you know, decades making sure that they got me back. And they did. They got me back.

INT: How did that affect your family?

**15:14:38 – C/U**

K: Oh, it was devastating, you know, it wasn’t just my family it was numerous families, you know. All my co-defendants, and uh... one of my co-defendants was my high school basketball coach. He’s never been involved in anything criminal his entire life, but he’d done a couple of real estate developments with me, and uh, you know, the way the federal government does it, I mean, if you don’t plead out, you know, they have a 90 or 92%, I think it’s a 92% conviction rate, and if you don’t plead out, they give you 20 or 30 years. So you know, out of fear, my old high school basketball coach and his wife and his son all ended up taking money laundering convictions out of this case, and they lost everything. They lost millions of dollars and their retirements and it was just terrible, you know. So they were collateral damage. Uh... Yeah I mean it was devastating to all of us, you know. Uh... you know, it was a big change in everybody’s lifestyle, that was for sure.

(Camera briefly moves down to Kent’s hands and back to his face)

INT: Did you ever think it was going to become legal?

**15:16:00**

K: You know, I did early on.

INT: Include the question when you answer.

**15:16:09 – W/S**

K: Did I ever think it was gonna become legal? Yes, in the early years I was sure of it. You know Carter had come out, and Playboy Magazine and stuff like that and I mean it was just around the corner, it was gonna happen any day, you know, it was gonna be legal. I remember a guy from my hometown got busted and they gave him 30 days for growing pot, and we were all outraged and uh, we were gonna go down and have a march, you know down in front of the courthouse and we were outraged that they would put anybody in jail for that, you know, we were shocked. And then you know, it started to, uh, the Reagan administration come in and then it started to deteriorate, you know... The sentencing guidelines that went into effect in 1988 or ’89 and that changed things, you know, very dramatically. All of a sudden, all of a sudden guys are getting 15 or 20 years whereas just you know, a few years before that it was probation or very little time. So... uh... I got off track there. Yeah, uh.

INT: What do you think of the industry now?

**15:17:31 – W/S**

K: I think they need to be afraid.

INT: Who’s “they”?

K: The guys who own the dispensaries and you know, I just left Terminal Island and there’s lots of guys walking the yard down there that just got there. There was a guy from Bakersfield uh, he’s only been down now for less than a year, and he’d had a dispensary for a number of years in Bakers- Bakersfield, uh, all these guys, they’re very successful with their dispensaries. There’s a guy in Terminal Island right now he had nine dispensaries in the Los Angeles area, uh, they gave him 22 years and took $25 million in assets. Cause it might be legal statewide, but it’s not legal federally. And you know, some prosecutor, if he’s looking at $25 million just sitting there for him to take, he doesn’t even have to make a case. The case is made, it’s all right there in the accounting and the bookkeeping of the dispensary, you know. Uh, you know, they pick them off. So up here in Oregon and Washington, these guys don’t know that yet. They don’t know it, but the federal prisons have lots of guys, lots of dispensary owners, lots of people who grow for dispensaries, you know. And you know, it looks, I could be wrong, but it looks to me like your chances of getting arrested are directly related to how successful you are. You know, if you’re very successful and you have a lot of assets, you’re, you know, you might be a target.