

# FIRST THEY CAME FOR WIKILEAKS ... THEN THEY CAME FOR POT DISPENSARIES ... THEN ONLINE SHARING

Remember when Visa and PayPal cut off services to WikiLeaks as a result of what was clearly Administration pressure? The Administration never explicitly revealed it had pressured the financial services companies to cut off WikiLeaks. It never offered any due process. Just—poof! WikiLeaks was no longer welcome to use a public service other corporate-people were able to.

And almost no one blinked at that abuse of due process.

Then Visa and MasterCard cut off pot dispensaries in California.

Your credit is no longer any good at California medical marijuana dispensaries, whose accounts with credit card processors have been canceled, thanks to pressure from the federal government.

Merchant services providers – the intermediaries between retailers and credit card companies who process customers' payments – began informing their medical marijuana dealing clients that cannabis credit card transactions would not be processed after July 1, according to Stephen DeAngelo, Executive Director of Oakland's Harborside Health Center.

No government agency is taking credit for making marijuana a cash-only business. But the "factual pattern" is as follows, DeAngelo said: Officials from the Treasury Department flexed on

credit card companies, who then informed merchant services providers that they'd be "dropped from Visa and MasterCard forever" unless they stopped processing medical marijuana payments.

And PayPal has imposed new terms of services on file-sharing sites that will allow it to monitor sites for content.

According to *TorrentFreak*, PayPal has recently changed its terms of service, making requirements for file-sharing and newsgroup services far tighter than before.

The payment service, owned by eBay, now requires that "merchants must prohibit users from uploading files involving illegal content and indicate that users involved in such file transfers will be permanently removed from their service," and that "merchants must provide PayPal with free access to their service, so PayPal's Acceptable Use Policy department can monitor the content."

The pot dispensary move is really heartless: as the article points out, it means customers have to walk around with wads of cash. And since a lot of medical marijuana customers are on disability, it means poor people can't afford themselves the flexibility offered by credit cards.

And in addition to the specific injustice of undermining otherwise legal businesses, there's the general issue. As it does with international financial exchange, so the Government is now doing with corporate entities in the US, picking and choosing which ones will have access to modern financial services and which won't.

It's an arbitrary exercise of power against entities the government can't or won't make a legal, due process entailing case against.

Maybe you'll arbitrarily lose your credit card  
privileges next!