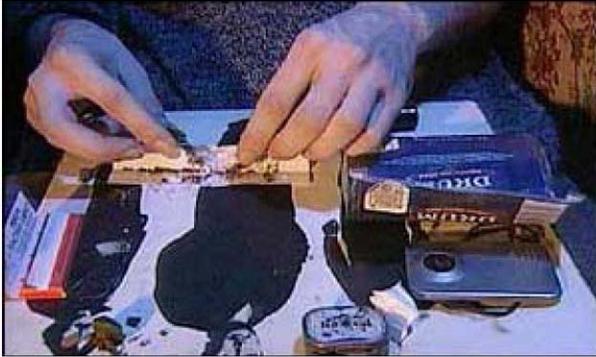




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28% of adults in Britain have taken drugs



A study for the "Observer" newspaper has indicated that more than a quarter of the adults in Britain have taken illegal drugs. The study suggests that 13 million adults 28% of the adult population -have used drugs including cannabis and ecstasy. It also revealed that two million people claim they took drugs while under the age of 14 and more than half of 16 to 24-year-olds have tried illegal substances.

Roger Howard, chief executive of Drugscope, said the findings did not surprise him. "The threat of criminal sanctions is simply not stopping large numbers of young people experimenting with drugs," he said in an interview with the newspaper.

Laws relaxed

These figures come as the government prepares to relax significantly the laws on cannabis. The "Observer" claims that Home Secretary, David Blunkett, plans to lay fresh legislation before Parliament in June to allow the reclassification of cannabis from Class B to Class C, a move widely seen as effective decriminalisation. Government officials have been quoted as saying that two of Mr Blunkett's three "tests" for relaxing the laws have been met. Earlier this year, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs came down in favour of the reclassification of cannabis. Another boost to the pro-cannabis lobby was the alleged success of an experiment by police in Lambeth in London, which was well received by the public, under which users have their cannabis seized rather than face prosecution. The third test is the long-awaited Home Affairs Select Committee report on drugs, which many expect to back the move when it is published next month.

TOBACCO

The survey of 1,075 adults for the Observer, weighted to reflect the general adult population, also found that more people now believe tobacco is a "greater risk" than ecstasy. The survey suggests more than five million people regularly use cannabis, 2.4 million ecstasy and two million amphetamines and cocaine. Men are twice as likely as women to have taken drugs, with the majority saying cannabis was their drug of choice. The survey also found that 35% thought cannabis should be decriminalised, 7% said ecstasy should be made legal, but only 4% thought all drugs should be freely available.

Comment : One of the marks of the world in the days just prior to Christ's return is that of widespread "sorcery." In Revelation 9:21, we read: "Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." The word "sorceries" means "enchantment with drugs." Widespread drug use is foretold in the Bible and is taking place to an unprecedented scale before our eyes. Revelation 18:23, speaking



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of the destruction of Babylon, the commercial capital of Antichrist's kingdom, says this: "And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Merchants are presently making themselves rich by the means of the drugs trade. Afghanistan, Pakistan, countries in South America, all are engaged in the drugs trade, some more clandestinely than others. Here in Northern Ireland, the paramilitaries have financed their terrorist campaigns and their opulent lifestyles by the means of drug sales. The IRA has been a leading force in the control and distribution of drugs and the sales of drugs have undoubtedly helped oil the wheels of the Sinn Fein political machine.