

Nearly Half Think Illegal Drugs Should Be Legalized

Nearly half of all readers responding to an ENQUIRER telephone poll believe the use of illegal drugs such as marijuana, cocaine and heroin should be legalized.

Should the use of illegal drugs such as marijuana, cocaine and heroin be legalized?

YES: 46.8% NO: 53.2%

In the poll, announced in our February 9 issue, over 5,000 readers called our "900" telephone numbers to answer "yes" or "no" to the

ENQUIRER PHONE-IN POLL

question: "Should the use of illegal drugs such as marijuana, cocaine and heroin be legalized?"

And of those who responded, 46.8 percent said

"Yes," while 53.2 percent said "No."

In The ENQUIRER's article, we presented the opposing views of two experts.

Dr. Arnold Trebach, pro-

essor of justice at American University and author of "The Great Drug War," favored legalization and explained:

"I believe the laws forbidding drug use do more harm than good. Today's drug laws create a huge black market in drugs, increase crime, cause massive corruption, destroy fundamental American rights — and they increase the popularity of illegal drug use.

"I believe the current national laws banning illegal drug use should be repealed, and that drugs should be controlled and dealt with the same way we control alcohol."

Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, argued the opposite position.

"We must not legalize illicit drugs. They are so dangerous and addictive that they must remain banned. Legalizing them would only send a message to our young people that we encourage drug abuse," he said.

"The laws against drugs have not worked perfectly. However, the answer is not to scrap the laws, but to improve their enforcement."

The Congressman said America should develop a "national anti-drug policy" including blocking drug shipments, arresting suppliers, stopping users, and helping drug-producing nations switch to other crops.

— PAUL F. LEVY

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