

America's drug experiment has been a disaster

By Melanie Phillips

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Fresh research has shown once again that cannabis is intensely harmful. A Swedish study of more than 45,000 men, published by The American Journal of Psychiatry, has revealed that those who used marijuana more than 50 times in their late teens were 40 per cent more likely to die by the age of 60 than those who never used it.

Study after study has flagged up the damage cannabis does to users and others in their ambit. Long-term potheads display on average an eight-point decline in IQ over time, a higher risk of psychosis and permanent brain damage.

They display more antisocial behaviour, such as stealing money or lying to get a job. They manifest more depression and demotivation, and conversely also a greater association with aggression and violent death.

Scientists from Britain, the US, Europe and Australia recently warned that the threat to mental health from heavy cannabis use was serious enough to warrant a global public health campaign.

If cannabis were legalised or decriminalised, more would use it. Untold millions more would then be enslaved to this drug. Given its numerous devastating side-effects, not to mention the gateway it provides to other illegal drugs, this would amount to a social catastrophe.

Almost without public comment, however, that is precisely what America is inflicting upon itself. It was President Obama who started this ball rolling. In his 2008 presidential campaign, he said he supported the "basic concept of using medical marijuana". Subsequently, his administration has winked at serial violations of federal drugs laws.

Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia have legalised cannabis for "medical" purposes. Alaska, Colorado, Oregon and Washington have gone further and made recreational cannabis legal.

In Britain, many have fallen for the legalisers' seductive siren song.

Two years ago, Obama said he was "encouraged" to see states allowing greater access to marijuana. One wonders if he is encouraged by the outcome. The US government's national survey on drug use and health reported in 2014 that one in ten Americans over the age of 12 had used an illicit drug in the previous 30 days, a higher percentage than in every year from 2002 to 2013.

In part, it said, this reflected the rising use of cannabis which had reached a similar record level. By an amazing coincidence, it turns out this rise was fastest in those states that had legalised the drug. Colorado legalised medical marijuana in 2006 and its recreational use in 2012. Now it leads the country in cannabis use by 12 to 18 year-olds over the past month, with Oregon fifth

and Washington in sixth place. Between 2007 and 2009, an average 5.6 per cent of Colorado's high school students tested positive for cannabis. By 2012 this had soared to 57 per cent.

Of course it doesn't stop there. "Soft" drugs open doors to hard drugs. So the US is also buckling under a wave of heroin and opiate addiction, described by a medical witness to the Senate judiciary committee last January as a "public health epidemic".

While Obama lifted the bar, this epidemic is principally the result of the transnational multi-million dollar campaign to legalise drugs, funded in large measure by the financier George Soros.

He wrote in his autobiography that his remedy for drug abuse would be to establish a "strictly controlled distribution network" that he would run and through which he would make most drugs legally available.

According to Forbes magazine, he has spent some \$200 million since 1994 campaigning for drug legalisation in the US and throughout the West. His globally embedded activist groups have distorted the entire drugs debate through their ubiquitous propaganda. Their core mantra is that "the war on drugs has failed". On the contrary, in stubbornly prohibitionist Britain illegal drug use has been declining.

Legalisation, they claim, will end drug crime. Nonsense. Unless all drugs are distributed free of cost or without restrictions, there will always be a black market. Last year, Colorado's attorney-general Cynthia Coffman admitted: "We have plenty of cartel activity in Colorado (and) plenty of illegal activity that has not decreased at all."

In Britain, many whose ignorance is exceeded only by their credulity have fallen for the legalisers' siren song. The all-party parliamentary group for drug policy reform, which has called for the possession and use of all drugs to be decriminalised and said users have a human right to feed their habit, states on its website that it has "received financial assistance from the Open Society Fund", which is financed by George Soros.

The legalisers' goal is overturning the UN drug conventions that underpin the criminalisation of the drugs trade. Recently, a special assembly of the UN General Assembly was convened at their behest to discuss drug policy reform.

Soros spent a reported \$48 million on this alone. Soros-funded activists and their supporters claimed that 1,000 world leaders were calling for the decriminalisation and regulation of drugs. These alleged leaders, however, were largely Soros fronts and other legalisers. They failed. The UN and its member states decided to hold the line against illegal narcotics.

The US hasn't done so. America has now embarked on a process that leads ineluctably to social and cultural decay, nudged into it by none other than the leader of the free world himself.