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Fri, November 26, 2004

By MARIA MCCLINTOCK, OTTAWA BUREAU

People offering tokin' support

A PAIR OF national surveys prove Canadians would support the decriminalization of pot, according to an advocacy group. The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORMAL) said a new SES poll which shows that 57% of those polled think adults who are caught with small quantities of marijuana should be left alone and not face criminal charges. It also shows 28% think clamping down on dope smokers is a bad use of law-enforcement resources.

JUST LIKE WINE

The poll of 1.000 Canadians is considered accurate plus or minus 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

"Our poll shows that the majority of Canadians agree with us. Marijuana should be taxed and regulated like beer and wine," said NORMAL spokesman Jody Pressman.

"Government control over the sale and distribution of marijuana would generate billions of dollars in revenue for social programs and eliminate the criminal involvement in the marijuana trade."

The SES poll reflects a similar trend found by the Canadian Addiction Survey released this week that showed drug use among Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24 has doubled in the last 10 years.

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