

**Christianne Andonovski**

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**From:** [REDACTED] <wordpress@wp.greens.org.au>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 16 February 2017 7:13 PM  
**To:** LRRCS  
**Subject:** The War on Drugs: An Expression of Disappointment

RE: INQUIRY INTO DRUG LAW REFORM

The War on Drugs: An Expression of Disappointment

I'm a middle class Australian boy from a very privileged background. Perfect family, perfect health, perfect life. I do appreciate the luck I have, and certainly recognise the role my country has had in providing the sustainable lifestyle I am able to lead.

At the same time, though, I cannot help but feel a little outraged and the current state of affairs. Sure, I could go on and on about the problems we are facing right now...but an issue I hold quite dearly to me is of course the way our government is going about the problem of drugs in our society.

I don't really know how these sort of inquiries are meant to go, so I will try and keep it short and sweet. I went through "drug education" during both primary and secondary school, and what I learnt was that drugs are bad. I, to this day, somewhat agree. They have the ability to take or destroy lives, and not just the lives of those who use them.

But it is nowhere near as simple as that. It doesn't take long to figure out that people are going to break the rules, regardless of the circumstances and especially if it makes them feel good. When I learnt that marijuana didn't ruin your life immediately, as I was taught during my education, I also learnt that the government wasn't telling the whole truth.

So I started smoking it. It didn't ruin my life either. So I started trying other drugs, they didn't ruin my life either. It was then that I realised drugs on their own aren't the issue. It's how people use them. People need to know they are ingesting safe substances, and not only that but they need the ability use them safely, and to know that the government is there to help them if anything goes wrong. I have witnessed a close friend dwindle into ice addiction, another lose their life to heroin, and know of others close to death from overdose of other drugs.

Drugs are a problem, but pretending they are isolated to use of degenerates and simply labelling it as a crime is doing no one any justice. We need pill testing to reduce harm, we need the correct information about the short and long term effects of each drug, we need support in times of addiction or emergencies, and the reassurance that the law is on our side. Education is of paramount importance in reducing harm for any instance. Be it drugs, sex, violence, or the environment. Right now we are below an acceptable standard in this field.

The children of today, like me, will be entering adolescence with the knowledge that not everything we are told is the truth. They will likely be trying drugs for themselves, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they will have a sense of responsibility.

Thank you for your time.

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I'm happy for my submission and details to be made public.