

Submission
No 71

INQUIRY INTO USE OF CANNABIS FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

Use of cannabis for medical purposes (Inquiry)

I have never used Cannabis in any form but would like to have it legalised for medical use so that if I need it in the future I do not need to break the law in order to do so as set out in my attachment.

In 73.5 years I have never had the slightest inclination to take even one puff of cannabis or marihuana as I had always known it in that time. At this stage I have no interest in changing that situation but if I do find myself suffering in the future I would like the option of trying it and still remain within the law.

I have great sympathy for people who are left with no option but to break the law and use it to assist with pain. 20 years ago I had an illness called Guillain Barré Syndrome which meant for a time I sampled what MS and Stroke sufferers constantly go through with having muscles that are not active. I can only describe the pain as excruciating and feel sure that anyone having sampled that pain would immediately take medical cannabis off the unlawful list.

As I have never touched Cannabis my research comes from people who have and my sorting out the wheat from the chaff on the internet.

It seems that man has been using Cannabis in all its forms for over 5,000 years. In fact without it much of the world would not have been discovered when it was.

In my investigation I found no adverse reference to it being a danger to man until the 1930s and even then it was based on innuendo rather than solid evidence. Age has tended to make me more cynical than most, so I lean to believe it was more than a coincidence that it was also about this time that DuPont were developing Nylon and Hearst Newspapers had bought up huge forest areas to produce newsprint paper. At that time Cannabis (Hemp) products would have been a huge threat to the success of both those companies' projects.

As it involved very clever, powerful and influential people who realised they could not attack hemp directly as it was a superior product, so they attacked Cannabis in general and then targeted by demonising its medication side very successfully and managed to have all Cannabis classed as illegal.

It was not many years after that when the hypocrisy of it all kicked in when it was again legalised to help in the WW2 effort only to be again demonised and made illegal again after the war.

Many would say that companies would not do that sort of thing to gain an advantage but I remember reading about all the dirty tricks that Henry Ford used in order to establish the automobile as the preferred form of transport. There is some irony in using Henry Ford as an example as he did at one stage build a complete car including its fuel from Cannabis products.

I have seen no evidence beyond reasonable doubt that Cannabis is the demon it was made out to be. Because doctors are gagged with its illegal status, when told by patients that they are using it their stock answer seems to be 'just keep doing what you are doing'. If it had legal status then perhaps we could hear what doctors truly think about medical Cannabis use.

From my investigation on the internet it seems inevitable that people are starting to see the fraud from the 1930s and Cannabis is slowly again being accepted throughout the world as it had been for those thousands of years. This is even happening in the USA where the fraud originated. My concern is that in Australia we may move too slowly and other countries will get ahead of us with research into medical Cannabis. This could also deprive Australia and governments of a financial bonanza.

It also troubles me that approval may be restricted to one or two multinational that may have already been doing research overseas and they then try to monopolise distribution in Australia. I have seen how many of these have dealt with other natural products and how they try to break them down into specific elements so that they can then patent these. Invariably these are inferior to the synergistic results from the natural product but they gain advantage through their patents and possibly some unwitting government support. These companies also tend to put things into tablet form which can leave it open for others to manipulate contents in a tablet that looks similar.

I understand that this synergistic advantage is still possible to retain by developing specific strains of plants for specific types of illnesses.

History has shown that Australians, both as individuals and in groups are extremely inventive people and so I would expect that given the opportunity, one or some of them would ultimately develop medical Cannabis plants to extract the maximum benefit from it for a large number of suffering Australians.

Once this has been achieved they should have the right to franchise out their strain of plant both within Australia and also as an export.

Therefore I believe that individuals and companies including multinationals should be allowed to register to produce medical Cannabis and at the same time give them an amnesty to also register any strain of seed or plant they may possess.

If the registration regulations are too draconian then I see that will simply drive it underground again and encourage criminal involvement, besides starving off development that could be worth millions of dollars to Australia and the government.

From what I see on the internet such over restriction appears to have already stifled the approval to grow Cannabis as Hemp as people seem to feel there is still a stigma in getting involved with it. This would appear to be robbing Australia of not only a huge market in respect of the products Hemp can produce but also missing out on the recurring huge carbon retention benefits it has.