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The Committee Secretary  
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee  
House of Representatives  
Parliament of Australia

By fax: 02 6277 4773

11 August 2002

**Subject: Crime in the Community inquiry**

Dear Secretary

Please excuse the delay in getting this to you. I should have e-mailed it on Friday from work but didn't have time so I'm sending it from my home fax.

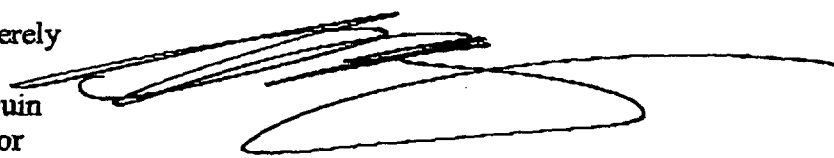
It is a submission to the Crime in the Community inquiry from Tony, a supporter and volunteer with Justice Action.

He can be contacted through me at JA office on 02 9281 5100 (phone) or e-mail [ariel@justiceaction.org.au](mailto:ariel@justiceaction.org.au) NSW.

I hope you will be able to accept this material. Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Ariel Marguin  
Co-ordinator  
Justice Action



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The Committee Secretary

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**WE LOVE CRIME**

Some say the biggest industry in the country is crime. It employs vast numbers of workers in police, security industries, building, prisons, courts, and other departments of the public service.

The media thrives upon it. Without it for example the Telegraph, Alan Jones and John Laws would be silenced. They would have nothing to pontificate about.

The greater the levels of paranoia in the community, the greater the populace will spend on security. The people will swallow the need for greater taxation, swallow more police and politicians laws proscribing more controls on human behaviour resulting in more crime.

The fear of crime is different from fear of violence. Yet it is the fear and perpetration of violence that affects lives the most. Violence from government through the use of police and other governmental agents of control is by far the greater problem than fear of crime. However, it is notable that this Standing Committee has sidestepped the issue. Surprise surprise. The government has a huge vested interested in ensuring the real causes of distress in the community are not realistically addressed.

Leaving aside the above criticism let us examine the terms of reference:

**(a) the types of crimes committed against Australians:**

Considerable distress exists in the community as a result of ineffectual drug laws. It is estimated 20,000 Australians die from the use of tobacco every year. Many thousands currently suffer terminal illness from tobacco. In their wisdom our leaders do little or nothing about this. They perpetrate mass death in the community by bolstering the tobacco industry at the expense of public health. Though remedies exist to change this. Death and injury in vehicle accidents is enormous, but the government does nothing or little to improve road, car and public transport engineering.

**(b) Perpetrators of crime and motives:**

Poverty is the root cause of property crime. Most property crime, we are told, is caused by poor drug addicts needing money for a fix. The solution is to make drug dependence a medical issue. If addicts had access to clean, known dose supplies prescribed by their doctor they would be healthier and able to hold down jobs and property crime would fall substantially. This is another example of government not acting and continuing to abuse the population.

**(c) fear of crime in the community:**

The above examples can easily be followed through to media whose role exists to manufacture news. News is any story based on the duality of right and wrong. Duality is a simple concept easily swallowed by the populace with a mental age of 12, the age at which most media aim for, ie 100 IQ points. That is, the average mental understanding of the population. This is important to know. Media use the raw material of police reports (through police media), parliamentary reports and the like to assemble newsworthy stories. Where a huge police and parliamentary industry exists most stories will emanate from them which is the case in this country. The genesis of stories are designed to

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bolster community perceptions that what the government or police is or is not doing is best.

**(c) the impact of being a victim of crime and fear of crime:**

The perpetrator of a crime is usually the victim of a crime. Retribution, fuelled by the rage following abuse is a normal reaction to trauma. In time as the trauma dissipates the rage of retribution subsides to be replaced with an understanding of the abusive event, and perhaps action to prevent a similar abuse taking place in future. The burgled householder installs a safe and window bars. The assaulted person takes self defence lessons. The victim of an abuse turns against society by stealing from the community to make ends meet, becoming delinquent as a means of retribution against society, decides to withdraw from society by not contributing. This last behaviour is common in school children and released prisoners. The simple may support politicians who prescribe law and order solutions none of which work. Australian politics seems to thrive upon the abuse of the people. The police themselves, being human beings, are traumatised by the job. This evidenced in the huge sick leave numbers resignations, bastardisation and suicides in the police.

**(d) strategies to support victims and reduce crime:**

The victims of assault require health services. Initially physical care then counselling services. These services are obtained at the local hospital, community health centre rape crisis service and women's refuge. All health care and services are being run down by all governments in Australia. Therefore re-establishing effective funding to health and welfare services would be a start for this group.

Attacking poverty through wealth distribution and addressing the deprivations of children would treat the root causes of antisocial behaviour. The purposeful maintenance of a group of socially and economically deprived is a crime by the Australian government against society in particular children who are the victims.

Drug law reform is decades overdue. By repealing the drug laws addicts, their children and other significant others would have a better chance being integrated citizens.

**(e) apprehension rates:**

The police are a corrupt agency in society. The more police the more corruption, the more damage to the community. The perpetrators of crimes are currently overwhelmingly people who have suffered in society. They are the drug dependent people, mentally ill, developmentally disabled, people with behavioural problems related to early life experience of abuse and deprivation. Police, courts and prisons further abuse these people. Apprehension rates alone do nothing to stop crimes. Apprehension itself is often a crime in that violence is used as part of the apprehension process.

**(g) effectiveness of sentencing:** For many the sentences handed down are abusive and meaningless in today's world. Prisoners are made worse by incarceration. Victims are unable to get redress for wrongs. The people are not adequately protected from re-occurrence. The crime industry consumes more and more of the communities taxes without any decrease in crime levels. Many so called crimes are deliberately set up by laws not designed for a modern society. Much

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human behaviour proscribed as crime is not in fact 'criminal' in intent by the perpetrator. Drug behaviour is good example of this.

(h) **community safety and policing:**

The police rule by violence. Police carry lethal weapons and use them against the people. The people are not safe with police. Desperate and disturbed robbers responding to police aggression arm themselves. The police have search and arrest powers far beyond what is reasonable. The people fear the police, they also fear the desperate poor and drug addicted who may rob and assault them. Police use their own weapons to murder each other and commit suicide, There are also firearm accidents. Teenagers and anyone who has come in contact with police know how abusive they are. Policing needs radical reform if safety is a serious consideration.

TONY

JUSTICE ACTION supporter /

Volunteer

5/8/02