

Isabel Hilton: Don't blame the Haitians for doubting US promises

## US waves white flag in disastrous 'war on drugs'

After 40 years, Washington is quietly giving up on a futile battle that has spread corruption and destroyed thousands of lives

By Hugh O'Shaughnessy

Sunday, 17 January 2010

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*Mexican drug dealers on the American border target local users because of the difficulty of smuggling*

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After 40 years of defeat and failure, America's "war on drugs" is being buried in the same fashion as it was born – amid bloodshed, confusion, corruption and scandal. US agents are being pulled from South America; Washington is putting its narcotics policy under review, and a newly confident region is no longer prepared to swallow its fatal Prohibition error. Indeed, after the expenditure of billions of dollars and the violent deaths of tens of thousands of people, a suitable epitaph for America's longest "war" may well be the plan, in Bolivia, for every family to be given the right to grow coca in its own backyard.

The "war", declared unilaterally throughout the world by Richard Nixon in 1969, is expiring as its strategists start discarding plans that have proved futile over four decades: they are preparing to withdraw their agents from narcotics battlefields from Colombia to Afghanistan and beginning to coach them in the art of trumpeting victory and melting away into anonymous defeat. Not surprisingly, the new strategy is being gingerly aired in the media of the US establishment, from The Wall Street Journal to the Miami Herald.

Prospects in the new decade are thus opening up for vast amounts of useless government expenditure being reassigned to the treatment of addicts instead of their capture and imprisonment. And, no less important, the ever-expanding balloon of corruption that the "war" has brought to heads of government, armies and police forces wherever it has been waged may slowly start to deflate.

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Prepare to shed a tear over the loss of revenue that eventual decriminalisation of narcotics could bring to the traffickers, large and small, and to the contractors who have been making good money building and running the new prisons that help to bankrupt governments – in the US in particular, where drug offenders – principally small retailers and seldom the rich and important wholesalers – have helped to push the prison population to 1,600,000; their imprisonment is already straining federal and state budgets. In Mississippi, where drug offenders once had to serve 85 per cent of their sentences, they are now being required to serve less than a quarter. California has been ordered to release 40,000 inmates because its prisons are hugely overcrowded.

At the same time, some in the US are confused and fear that the new commission proposed by Congressman Eliot Engel, a man with a record of hostility to the Cuban and Venezuelan governments, may prove to be a broken reed. As he brought in his bill he added timidly: "Let me be absolutely clear that this bill has not been introduced to support the legalisation of illegal drugs. That is not something that I would like to see."

Part of the reason for the slow US retreat from the "war" is that the strategy of fighting it in foreign lands and not at home has proved valueless. Along the already sensitive frontier with Mexico the effect of US attempts to enforce a hard line by blasting drug dealers away has been bloody. Anxious to keep in check the flood of illegal immigrants into territory that once belonged to Mexico, Washington is building a wall and fence comparable to that which once cut through Berlin and that which is today causing havoc between Israelis and Palestinians.

In the areas of Mexico closest to the US frontier the toll of deaths in drug-related violence exceeded 7,000 people in 2009 (1,000 of them dying in January and February). This takes the death toll over three years to above 16,000, figures far in excess of US fatalities in Afghanistan. The bloodshed has continued despite – or perhaps because of – the intense US pressure on President Felipe Calderon to station a large part of the Mexican army in the region. It is deploying 49,000 men on its own soil in the campaign against drugs, a larger force than the 46,000 Britain sent to take part in the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003. But still the blood flows.

As in Colombia, where a multibillion-dollar US subsidy maintains that country's armed forces, there are well-founded suspicions that military operations are often rendered futile

because the miserably paid local commanders and individual soldiers are easily bought off by drug dealers.

The quiet expiry of the "war" has dawned slowly on a world focused on the US's more palpable conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Last month, the US House of Representatives gave unanimous approval to a bill creating an independent commission to reconsider domestic and international drug policies and suggest better ones. Congressman Engel, a Democrat from the Bronx and the sponsor of the bill, declared: "Billions upon billions of US taxpayer dollars have been spent over the years to combat the drug trade in Latin America and the Caribbean. In spite of our efforts, the positive results are few and far between."

As far back as last May, Gil Kerlikowske, the former police chief of Seattle who was named head of the US Office of National Drug Control Policy and thus boss of the campaign, announced he would not be using the term "war on drugs" any more. A few weeks earlier, former Latin American presidents of the centre and right - Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil, Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and Cesar Gaviria of Colombia - had told the new US President that the "war" had failed and appealed for greater emphasis on cutting drug consumption and the decriminalisation of cannabis.

For the lives and sanity of millions, the seeing of the light is decidedly late. The conditions of the 1920s, when the US Congress outlawed alcohol and allowed Al Capone and his kin to make massive fortunes, have been re-created up and down Latin America.

Mexico's President has not been afraid to point out to Washington that official corruption is at the root of drug trafficking in the US just as it is in Mexico. "I say we should investigate on both sides. I'm cleaning my house and I hope that on the other side as well the house is being cleaned," he said pointedly last April before President Obama came visiting.

Furthermore, President Calderon says that lax gun control laws in the US caused an influx of firearms into Mexico. He has declared that 90 per cent of the 30,000 weapons that government forces seized from drug dealers in Mexico came from north of the border. For their part, the Latin Americans, under a new generation of more self-confident leaders, are tired of being hectored about their failings by the US, the world's principal source of cannabis whose agents continue the drug dealing they indulged in during the Iran-Contra affair of the Reagan years.

Evidence points to aircraft - familiarly known as "torture taxis" - used by the CIA to move captives seized in its kidnapping or "extraordinary rendition" operations through Gatwick and other airports in the EU being simultaneously used for drug distribution in the Western hemisphere. A Gulfstream II jet aircraft N9875A identified by the British Government and the European Parliament as being involved in this traffic crashed in Mexico in September 2008 while en route from Colombia to the US with a load of more than three tons of cocaine.

In 2004, another torture taxi crashed in a field in Nicaragua with a ton of cocaine aboard. It had been identified by Britain and the European Parliament's temporary committee on the alleged use of European countries by the CIA for the transport and illegal detention of prisoners as a frequent visitor in 2004 and 2005 to British, Cypriot, Czech, German, Greek, Hungarian, Spanish and other European cities with its cargo of captives for secret imprisonment and torture in Iraq, Jordan and Azerbaijan.

Given the circumstances, it is unremarkable that US strictures are being politely ignored. President Evo Morales of Bolivia - criticised by the US for defending Bolivians' practice of chewing coca leaves to assuage hunger and altitude sickness - wants to allow every Bolivian family around the city of Cochabamba to cultivate coca bushes for their own use. He also wants to export coca leaves to his country's neighbours. Mr Morales's authority, recently reinforced by winning a second presidential term in fair elections and by a strengthening of Bolivia's economy, has no need to worry about US criticism.

Venezuela and Bolivia have expelled US narcotics officers from their territory. At the end of last month, President Rafael Correa of Ecuador ended Washington's lease of a large air base on the Pacific from where US aircraft were engaged in the struggle against the region's increasingly powerful left.

This year should be the year that common sense vanquishes the mailed fist in an unwinnable war against an invisible enemy.

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### Columbia

 floppiefrog wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 01:38 am (UTC)

I wonder whether the US will now abandon its plans to enlarge and upgrade its military bases in Columbia or are the facilities required to reassert US dominance in Latin America as many suspect?

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### The new year approaching, click in. Let's facelift bar! ===== w w w . i t e m t o l i v e . c o m =====

[nnitklin](#) wrote:  
Monday, 18 January 2010 at 02:36 am (UTC)

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### War on Drugs

[slammer06](#) wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 03:29 am (UTC)

At last some common-sense. Now that the DEA no longer have a vested interest and have lost some of their lobbying capabilities perhaps the American Government could consider de-criminalising drugs. Satellite Britain would then follow and years of corruption, murder and unnecessary deaths will come to an end.

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### Misprint

[kwenchin](#) wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 04:28 am (UTC)  
N9875A should read N987SA

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### legalise drugs

[jeanshaw](#) wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 07:09 am (UTC)

Hopefully Governments are waking upto the fact that as long as drugs are illegal crime will follow as surely as night follows day.

The sensible thing to do is legalise their sale , sell them through retail channels ( chemists seem a very good outlet to provide this service ) , tax them , provide sensible treatment for anyone who becomes addicted but conversely punish severely anyone who continues to import/sell them illegally .

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### Re: legalise drugs

[libertarian09](#) wrote:  
Monday, 18 January 2010 at 05:02 am (UTC)

Just as alcohol and tobacco are dealt with. I can't remember the last time people were killed over trafficking either of these two drugs.

Prohibit or legalize, whichever the people want, just drop the hypocritical double standard. You can't condone the legal sale of booze and smokes (both of which have horrendous impacts) while criminalizing somebody for smoking pot or whatever

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### Two alternatives to the war on drugs


[redroseandy](#) wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 07:17 am (UTC)

Counties that have legalised hard drugs have found that this cuts out the criminals and lessens the amount used. Hard drugs loose their 'coolness' when they can be bought at the local chemist so people buy less. The US does not seem to want to go down this route at the moment, so cheap and simple alternatives could be the way forward. A mouthfull of cigarette smoke hyperventilated into a toy balloon is one such way. Another such invention is to put wine into a 'soda stream' and then drinking it with a straw. Because less cigarettes and alcohol are used in this way the threat of addiction is minimised and you do not want to imbibe vast quantities with these methods.

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## California

 **fsoe** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:29 am (UTC)


California will debate cannabis legalisation in November, and polling indicates this is very likely to be passed. The genie's out of the bottle, and drugs prohibition has had its day.

<http://www.mpp.org/states/california/information-about-ab-390.html>

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## Legalisation is not a simple answer

 **nearlyredken** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:46 am (UTC)


The question of legalisation is really not that simple. Of all the drug types cannabis appears to be the one that can have the least effect on the user and the rest of the population. Even so questions over quality, distribution methods and any crimes that might be associated with its supply would have to be worked out.

Legal drugs already have standards set for them. They are supplied by commercial entities. Who would supply the newly-legalised drugs? If it was the government it could be exposed to an enormous risk of litigation aside from the health risks. Can any government countenance the idea of deliberately making substances that can kill or cause harm to others available? Could we find ourselves in the absurd position of having the State in the dock over a crime committed by a defendant on State supplied drugs? I don't hold that legalisation will solve the problem. Alcohol is legal everywhere, yet few other other countries suffer the type of social degeneracy that the English, Irish, Scots and the Welsh bring with consuming it.

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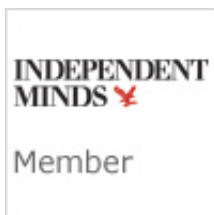


## Re: Legalisation is not a simple answer

 **libertarian09** wrote:  
Monday, 18 January 2010 at 05:06 am (UTC)

Alcohol is not legal everywhere. But I agree with you about the havoc it plays in the home and on society in general.

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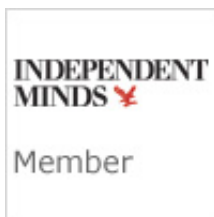
## US-Mexico wall and fence

 **yojnala** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 11:37 am (UTC)

The wall "causing havoc between Israelis and Palestinians" does so because it is not built on the recognised border but encroaches into "occupied territory" - areas that Palestinians expect to be part of a their state when a peace deal is finally agreed. If the wall had been built on the Green Line this would have adequately and reasonably met its stated purpose - to protect Israel from suicide bombers. The actual route whereby it encloses large areas beyond the Green Line show that protection is not its only purpose.

The US-Mexico wall is very different in that it is built on US territory and is not been used in an attempt to annex Mexican territory - that was done more effectively in the 19th century by other means.

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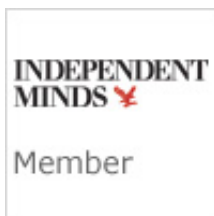


## Prohibition has failed.


 **xoixoi1** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 11:50 am (UTC)

The idea that the state does not own the bodies of its citizens is fundamental. All drugs should be legalised. The traffickers have, for too long, gotten away with over-charging users. A dose of heroin costs less than 4 pence and a gramme of cocaine less than £3 to produce. The high prices of drugs is the central cause of drug related crime. Registered drug users should receive their drugs on perscription at cost price to the NHS if they are in part or full time employment. Just because someone has a disability by being addicted to a drug is no excuse not to have a job (obviously one that does not require operating dangerous machinery). Kill two birds with one stone. By sourcing heroin only from warlords in Afghanistan that support the democratically elected government in Kabul, we can kill a third bird too.

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## As Einstein said


 **jonnyjaxx** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 01:23 pm (UTC)

As Einstein said, the definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result. A new approach must be adopted. Changes should be gradual - maybe legalising cannabis and making sure its sale is taxed and regulated. The war on drugs has caused such misery there must be a better way ...

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## The Outdated Ideologies

 **xyberia44** wrote:  
Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 02:20 pm (UTC)

of the US and UK in its fight against drugs are proven massive failures, But i suppose the creation of this war on Drugs allows for platforms to win elections and fund more useless drugs programmes, How could Insurance companies be able to increase policies year in year out, without the continued burglaries, and crimes against property, blamed on drugs users, The Police would have less to do, and governments would be with out a KNEE JERK movements to pacify and encourage the already meted ears of an electorate so used to lies it swallows better than a 70's German porn star, I think that legalizing drugs and earning revenue from drugs, will get rid of the street dealers, Drug importers, petty crimes, burglaries and murder among certain groups and reduce the amount of wasted police time, pursuing users rather than focusing on real criminals, like Members of Parliament and others white collar crime, that strangle the economy through their abuses, and have a wider detrimental effect of society as a whole, allowing for funding to go where it is needed, Revenue from Legalizing drugs would cover the Bill for NHS rehab programs, allow for better education about drugs, Alcohol and Smoking is costing the NHS more than any drug rehab, or preventative drug programmes, I never saw a anti alcohol programme for schools, but a lot of idiot anti drugs programmes explained by outdated politically entrenched Policemen and government cronies, in their 50's trying to explain to a 12 yr old about the

dangers of drugs, Drugs are her to STAY, no doubt about it, Fighting fire with fire is just keeping old enemies in a stalemate, allowing for state agencies to grow rich along with the criminals,

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### There is no Solution

[ps89060](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 03:24 pm (UTC)

Legalize it and people will over do it. They will even buy it for their own kids(like booze). Keep it banned and we already see what happens. There is no way out. Build more re-habs. legalize weed. Educate people. These are some ways to bring down the ill-effects. At the end of the day we have to accept that there is no way to eradicate drug use or abuse, it is simple a 21 century problem. Lord help us.

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### Re: There is no Solution

[drg40](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 05:16 pm (UTC)

Attempt to legalize it and the profit margin crashes. End of trafficking while organized crime searches for something else to make a bomb on. Outcry in the US Senate - cries of restraint of trade & collapse of capitalism as we know it.

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### Re: There is no Solution

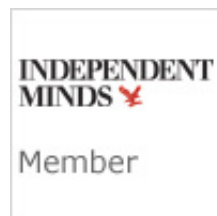
[indy77](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 06:50 pm (UTC)

Saudi Arabia does not have this problem. The reason why is simple....They have sharia law which means the ancestors of long ago took responsibility for the problem and chopped the fucking heads of all the dealers in public so that future generations can have their human right to live in peace and security.

We should take a leaf out of the muslims book since drug use and most crimes are almost unheard of in most muslim countries. They have a big sign at the airport "Drug Traffickers will be executed!" Written in big red letters as you enter the country. The customs officials stand there looking out for those that shit their pants as they read the giant sign.....lol.

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### Re: There is no Solution

[steve\\_wilds](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 08:25 pm (UTC)

Saudi Arabia gathers and publishes no data on its levels of drug abuse, so no-one knows what drug problems they have. It is interesting to note, however, that in 2007 the kingdom launched a campaign to eradicate drug use within its borders, so clearly "chopping the fucking heads off" dealers doesn't work there either.

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### Re: There is no Solution

[davison666](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 08:54 pm (UTC)

Yeah... they also shoot people in the head for being seen together and not being married.

Not sex. Not kissing. Not holding hands. Just walkin' and talkin'.

If you really want that type of jurisprudence you desire, then I guess you deserve what befalls you. When you give up your freedom for security you lose both. Did you forget that the fascists and fanatics are the bad guys? (regardless of whatever "ism" they claim to uphold)

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### Re: facists and fanatics

[libertarian09](#) wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 05:12 am (UTC)

Fascists and fanatics never see themselves as "bad guys". That's why most Americans can't understand why they are despised by so many around the world.

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### Re: There is no Solution

[hopeforjustice](#) wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 12:10 am (UTC)

From reading your post I can tell you have NEVER been to Saudi Arabia and have not spent any considerable amount of time in any Muslim country. I lived in the ME and I can tell you, drug abuse does exist in Muslim countries and goes largely unacknowledged, thus the favourable statistics you refer to.

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### Re: There is no Solution

[vancejo13](#) wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 09:02 am (UTC)

No drug problem in Islamic countries?

Look up Heroin and Pakistan, Iran, Turkey: all 3 countries have far greater problems with heroin/morphine abuse than any western nation.

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### Oh Happy Day

[bill\\_harris](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 04:24 pm (UTC)

The end of the plague of substance prohibition for once and for all cannot come too soon. We can only wish that the war on drugs was as much of a failure in its real aims as it has been in its cover story. As a foundation for class warfare against hippies, communists and non-whites, the CSA has been an unqualified success.

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## War on Drugs

[ernestpayne](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 04:29 pm (UTC)

Yet another war the US should never have begun and yet another war that could never be won.

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### US making billions in Afghan drugs

[edwod](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 04:53 pm (UTC)

Report: US, UK, Canada assist Afghan drug trade - A senior anti-drug official has accused the US, Britain and Canada of playing a major role in Afghanistan's lucrative drug trade. On the sidelines of an anti-drug conference in Tehran, deputy head of Drug Control Headquarters Taha Taheri said that Western powers are aiding the drug trade in Afghanistan. "According to our indisputable information, the presence of the United States, Britain and Canada has not reduced the dug trade and the three countries have had major roles in the distribution of drugs."

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### Re: US making billions in Afghan drugs

[geiseric](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 05:36 pm (UTC)

War on drugs?

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opium\\_production\\_in\\_Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opium_production_in_Afghanistan)

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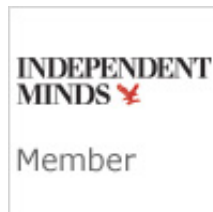
### Pro Choice

[chris\\_stress](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 05:43 pm (UTC)

I am 32 years old. I feel i have the right to decide for my self what i put into my body. As long as one is not committing a crime and hurting others what is the problem. How many people are on social security because of bogus back pain just because they are too damn lazy too get a job? So the problem of funding drug addicts who can't work because of their addiction really shouldn't be a problem. In fact it is hypocritical not to. Give people the correct information, not the government sponsored propaganda and let them make their own decision. I am the customs officer of my body, i will decide what passes the border of my skin!  
Chris Stress

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### Hopes For Exhilaration

[theprogramme](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 05:58 pm (UTC)

What happened to family life and all the joy it brings? Why must our "advanced" and "civilized" populace feel the need to take chemicals to alter the reality in which they find themselves? The need to get high on drugs or to get paralytic on alcohol is an attempt to mask over the symptoms that stem from a sick society.

The only difference between alcohol and heroin is that alcohol is legal. There's no doubt that more people in this country drink alcohol than inject heroin. Therefore we can only assume that if we legalize heroin the result will be an vast increase in addicts. Not to mention a bit of an overstay for our troops in Afghanistan.

The answer isn't to legalize but to prohibit. We need to take away the option for humans to become addicted to drugs, starting with cigarettes and alcohol. Slowly, over time, people won't see the need to turn to drugs for an escape. People should be exhilarated by family life, philanthropy and education.

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[davison666](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 08:46 pm (UTC)

""Why must our "advanced" and "civilized" populace feel the need to take chemicals to alter the reality in which they find themselves? The need to get high on drugs or to get paralytic on alcohol is an attempt to mask over the symptoms that stem from a sick society.""

Humans (and most other mammals) all have well documented attraction to substances that alter one's perception of reality. Are you saying that the elephants, monkeys and birds that gather to feast on fermenting fruit (and get inebriated) are trying to escape from their "sick societies"? Or that the art and creativity that has always accompanied use of mind-altering substances is wrong and useless?

The assumption that "if it's legal people will use/abuse it" is exactly the flawed logic that has kept the violent prohibition in place. How about, "if you educate people how something can be safely used and it's dangers they won't be incapable of thinking for themselves"?

Not everyone "blessed" with a idyllic homelife stays away from the drugs, and not every abused, orphaned street person becomes a needle freak. Prohibition IS the key if it is coupled with education - not just for the addicts, but for everyone who thinks that addiction is entirely a choice-based behavior, and that any use = abuse.

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[theprogramme](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:46 pm (UTC)

Hi

You can't compare animals with humans as we're far more intelligent. It's not flawed logic to assume that legalizing heroin wouldn't lead to more drug addicts, of course it would. It would be cleaner heroin for starters. Plus if heroin is freely available this opens the market to all and sundry, whereas at the moment a punter would need to know a dealer to acquire the drug.

I think you've taken my post slightly out of context. My point was why are people taking drugs in the first place? This is surely because cigarettes and alcohol are freely available along with being bombarded with adverts all your life. I'd agree that education is needed, but you also need to ban all drugs at the same time. Like I said, we should use human nature for our exhilaration, not drugs.

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[glastohead1995](#) wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 01:32 pm (UTC)

How about you choose what you want to use for 'exhilaration' and let others choose what they want (as long as they hurt no-one but themselves).

You clearly understand nothing about psychedelics, the historic use of entheogens by virtually every culture on Earth (at one time or another) and human nature. We are here to discover and explore - that's what we do. Outer space and inner space. If you aren't interested, that's fine, but keep your nose out of what other people want to do with their lives and don't judge them based upon your narrow world-view.

Ever heard of freedom? I know it isn't fashionable any more (certainly not amongst our New Labour masters) but it works for me.

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[yahew111](#) wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 01:47 pm (UTC)

"This is surely because cigarettes and alcohol are freely available along with being bombarded with adverts all your life."

That logic is warped. Governments are fighting a war on drugs - which people continue to take because they want to despite the total lack of advertising - and you blame lack of government control and prohibition on other lesser drugs ( alcohol and tobacco) for the cost of the criminality caused by the prohibition of harder drugs. Nonsense.

As was pointed out in the actual article that last time we tried prohibition of alcohol it created Al Capone ( this time most of the major drug lords are in Mexico which is nearly a failed State because of it).

Prohibition does not work. It doesn't matter if the alcohol free lifestyle works for you - it doesn't work for the vast majority. Arguing from a failure to prohibit hard drugs, a failure which has cost thousands of lives, drugs that we must prohibit alcohol is insane.

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[realmaz187](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:40 pm (UTC)

You should read some of Dr.Weil's books on drugs before you generalize like that. Haven't you ever seen children spin around until they're to dizzy to stand? Altering your perception of reality may be an inborn trait.

As to the "only difference between alcohol and heroin" alcohol use was lower before prohibition. Look it up.

The real problem is the Christian perception that anything that makes you feel good is inherently evil.

If you want people to be "exhilarated by family life, philanthropy and education", then you need to eliminate the politicians, priests (rabbis, ministers, etc.), and busy bodies who feel that you should only live their way or not at all. Get rid of laws that aren't about protecting lives and property, only about protecting you from yourself (and the profits lost by the corporates who pushed for many of these laws to begin with).

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### Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

[theprogramme](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:57 pm (UTC)

Hi

When an apple rots it stinks and if you eat it you will spit it out. This is our human defence mechanism against poison. Now tell me, what did your first taste of alcohol taste like...

Funny how you want to legalize drugs but eliminate priests, politicians and busy bodies. Are you a drug dealer?

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[fishmike](#) wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 07:34 pm (UTC)

As Frank Gallagher so eloquently puts in, in his patter at the start of "Shameless", a comedy drama from Manchester, England..."End Poverty Now, make drugs cheap!!"...Top Man Frank

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## Classification isn't prohibition

**fsoe** wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 09:20 pm (UTC)

The answer to nearlyredken's problem is classification.

Of course, different drugs have different capacities to do harm. That's why the Misuse of Drugs Act sets up a classification system, not a punishment regime.

It's a nonsense (and it's unlawful,) that alcohol and tobacco aren't classified. Users of these deadly killers aren't allowed better alternatives, nor the simple information that an honest classification can provide.

Legalise and classify all drugs. Let the classification inform the public health, not policing, response.

Given the choice, many people would prefer relatively harmless drugs to the killers alcohol and tobacco- if only they knew the facts about them.

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## And here's what the post-drug war world can work

**strollerdos** wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 10:13 pm (UTC)

The excellent 'After the War on Drugs: Blueprint for Regulation' published in November last year by the Transform Drug Policy Foundation, and available free online (pdf). <http://bit.ly/5QhrD>

"There is a growing recognition around the world that the prohibition of drugs is a counterproductive failure. However, a major barrier to drug law reform has been a widespread fear of the unknown—just what could a post-prohibition regime look like?

For the first time, 'After the War on Drugs: Blueprint for Regulation' answers that question by proposing specific models of regulation for each main type and preparation of prohibited drug, coupled with the principles and rationale for doing so.

We demonstrate that moving to the legal regulation of drugs is not an unthinkable, politically impossible step in the dark, but a sensible, pragmatic approach to control drug production, supply and use."

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## Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

**pjmceill** wrote:

Sunday, 17 January 2010 at 11:29 pm (UTC)

".....but you also need to ban all drugs at the same time."

Are you a coffee drinker? Coke? Love chocolate?

How would you get by when they banned them?

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## Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

**hopeforjustice** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 12:21 am (UTC)

As part of drug rehabilitation, addicts could be introduced to adrenaline sports, bungee jumping, sky diving, white water rafting, offpiste skiing/boarding, mountain/rock-climbing... risky, enorphin-producing activities (even the memory of it) exhilarating and should the worst happen - a nicer way to die than choking on your own stomach contents.

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## Re: Hopes For Exhilaration

**vencejo13** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 09:10 am (UTC)

"As part of drug rehabilitation, addicts could be introduced to adrenaline sports, bungee jumping, sky diving, white water rafting, offpiste skiing/boarding, mountain/rock-climbing... "

Why should this work?

I´m not an addict. I enjoy a nice bit of weed, the occasional E or a tab of acid.

I also regularly enjoy sky diving and free climbing (no ropes or artificial aids).

Both types of pastime give me the relaxation I want.

Don´t tell ME how to enjoy my life!

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## What Good News for the World!

**delpub** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 12:59 am (UTC)

Too late for many of the millions who have suffered, some fatally, under the brutality of the drug war, but possible relief for many more whose lives have been adversely affected and who now may see the light at the end of the tunnel. What a blessing for the poor, those poorly educated and ethnic minorities who have borne the brunt of this shameless imposition by a misguided superpower on the rest of the world. It demonstrates how tragically wrong things go when politicians fail to enact evidence based legislation. Whole generations of confused people will need to be re-educated based on the facts. Facts to replace the myths perpetrated by the scoundrels who lost their jobs at the end of prohibition and created new jobs for themselves starting with heroin and moving on ever widening their net and leaving misery in their wake.

D. Robinson, London.

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## Lost Human Opportunities

 **barry855** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 05:17 am (UTC)

After being a substance abuse counselor for the past 20 years, I cannot express the gratitude for the author of this article. The chances for change in human terms lost during this war due to mandatory imprisonment that just this writer has witnessed has numbered in the tens of thousands. Although clearly some few opportunities for change from the lifestyle of addiction, it seems we are now in a unique position to affect real change...that of the human body, mind, and spirit.

Barry in Temecula, CA

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 **kopsixtoes** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 07:24 am (UTC)

In the post-war-on-drugs world drug use will be condoned as being good for business. A high percentage of the tons of cocaine smuggled by the CIA went up the noses of silicon valley residents and Bill Gates didn't complain. Drug use will be an accepted means to cope with the multi-layered, multi-optional and multi-faceted culture of the future.

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## legalize weed

 **michiganian48** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 11:25 am (UTC)

once again it comes down to the people that our elected officials are suppose to represent. if the majority are in favor of legalization then the elected officials should comply. marijuana is the least of our worries, if we educate our children and quit hideing in the truth in the closet we wont have all the violence that we have with it today. Just like the bible thumpers have done with sex. The real problem are the ones that make the laws that only represent the few narrow minded people who again make the laws

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 **adam979** wrote:

Monday, 18 January 2010 at 02:11 pm (UTC)

How long is it going to be before the US waves the "white flag" in Afghanistan leaving the place even worse off than before?

Peasants with 1950's weaponry have been practically holding off the worlds "most powerful" for almost a decade now...

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