

Dear Mr Dorey

I am writing in response to your request for comments on how substance misuse is dealt with in Jersey.

A major issue that has never been addressed, is the subject of a highly adulterated and dangerous form of Cannabis Resin, "Soapbar".

Soapbar is the cheapest and lowest quality of cannabis available in the World. It is highly adulterated with many substances that when smoked are far more dangerous than any pure cannabis product could ever be. Common ingredients include Henna, Ketamine, Prescription Tranquilisers and Sedatives, Glue, Pine Resin, Coffee, Dye, Turpentine, Plastic, Rubber, Diesel, Animal excrement, Animal Blood and Cement Dust among others.

Soapbar originally starts life as good quality moroccan hashish, and after being transported to Spain, France, Holland or the UK, it is highly adulterated and repressed. Some Soapbar is exported from Morocco in this state also, but this tends to be of slightly higher quality, but still a very nasty product.

Soapbar contains less than 30% cannabis material, and often 10% or less. The "high" that is achieved from soapbar is mainly due to the prescription drugs and Ketamine (highly addictive), or solvents, rather than Cannabis. The THC content of Soapbar normally ranges from 0%-4%.

Soapbar comprises around 90-95% of the Cannabis available in Jersey. Ask any Cannabis user and they will tell you that it is extremely difficult to get anything else.

Soapbar is purely a product of prohibition. It is made by criminal gangs to expand their profits, whilst not caring about the health effects on the users. Soapbar costs around £40 an ounce in the UK, compared to £100-£160 for good quality Moroccan hash. It is this reason that it is the choice of the people importing cannabis into Jersey. The profits are huge, Soapbar sells for £140-£160 an ounce on the streets of Jersey.

The vast majority of Cannabis users have no idea of what they are smoking. Many people misakely believe that Soapbar is good quality hashish, especially younger users who have never had access to "clean" hashish. After finding out the truth about this terrible product a few years ago, i have not touched it since, preferring to do without rather than poison my body, but the same cannot be said for most Cannabis users. I have made a quest of the last few years to warn my fellow Cannabis users about the dangers of this product, but with not much success. The normal response is either to accuse me of lying, or great shock but "what can i do, i can't get anything else".

As long as Jersey continues it's very tough stance on Cannabis, the problem will continue. Is is very possible that in 10 or 20 years time there will be a huge problem with people getting Cancer and other Respiratory problems solely due to this product (it obviously doesn't help that most people smoke it with tobacco).

It was with great shock and sadness that i found out earlier this year that Cannabis would

not be downgraded to Class C in Jersey like the rest of the UK. I think i am right in saying that this is the first time Jersey has not followed UK Drug Classification to a tee, which seems rather strange to me. This is yet another reason why our young people are leaving Jersey in their droves never to return.

The effects a Cannabis prosecution can cause to a user are far worse than any damage Cannabis can do (soapbar aside), with the effects reaching into every area of their lives from Education and Job prospects, to Family relations, and Travel Opportunities, as well as the stigma of being named and shamed in the JEP. These people are not criminals, they are ordinary law abiding citizens, who much much more often than not are very useful and productive members of society. People who's lives can affectively be ruined by a drugs conviction.

In my view, the prosecution of Cannabis offenders is not only wrong but illegal. By prosecuting someone for personal possession of Cannabis, it is a clear breach of their Human Rights. Study after study come to the conclusion that Cannabis is less harmful than the two legal drugs Alcohol and Tobacco. Cannabis is clearly not a threat to society, thus it is a breach of an individuals human rights under various articles, including an individuals rights to Freedom of Religious Belief and the right to Privacy in ones Home and Correspondance. If a victim of a Cannabis prosection in Jersey went as far as the European Court to argue their case, which they would undoubtably win judging by previous cases, Jersey may find itself in a position where it has no choice other than to stop prosecting. Also i believe it may also be illegal for another reason. Jersey is signed up to the Human Rights Act through the UK, and (although i would have to speak to a Human Rights lawyer to confirm this) it is possible that because of this Jersey residents have the rights to the same treatment that people in the rest of the UK receive, which is not happening because Cannabis has been classified as a non-arrestable offence in the UK except in certain circumstances such as smoking in public, near schools, youth clubs etc.

Although i am solely a Cannabis user and don't use any other illegal drugs, i believe that it is wrong to criminalise a person for personal possession of any illegal drug. The state has no right to tell any person what they can and can't put in their own body.

The fact is that drugs ARE dangerous, but the fact that Illegal Drugs are in the hands of criminal gangs makes the dangers ten times higher, as is proved by the Soapbar Cannabis situation. Over the last few years i have been saddened by the deaths of 3 young people i went to school with, from Heroin overdoses. These people would not have died if they had been able to go to the Doctor and get a Heroin prescription. The sole reason for these deaths is the fact that they were used to getting extremely impure Heroin, and when a much stronger batch came around they injected their normal amount not realising that it was to be a fatal dose. This waste of life could have been prevented by a sensible drug strategy that included the prescription of Heroin to carefully vetted addicts. It is prohibition, not the drugs, that cause much death and suffering throughout the world every year.

I have included below, some links to various relevant internet articles for your attention.

SOAPBAR ARTICLES:

<http://www.ukcia.org/activism/soapbar.htm>

<http://www.uk420.com/boards/index.php?s=c5f752f6d53507419d3f56e13af10b07&showtopic=124&st=0>

http://icbirmingham.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100localnews/tm_objectid=14308529%26method=full%26siteid=50002%26headline=animal%2dwaste%2ddrug%2dbeing%2dsold%2dhere-name_page.html

<http://boards.cannabis.com/showthread.php?t=787>

http://www.geocities.com/the_only_hux/soapbar.html

CANNABIS AND THE LAW ARTICLES:

<http://www.cannabisireland.com/why.html>

HUMAN RIGHTS ARTICLES:

<http://www.ccguides.org.uk/contrary.html>

<http://www.ccguides.org.uk/humanrights.html>

There are hundreds more articles on Soapbar on the Net. Just type "Soapbar Cannabis" into any search engine.

Should you require any more information i would be happy to try and provide it. You would be hard pressed to find anyone in the Island with more knowledge of Cannabis related issues than myself.

Regards

Chris