

Judging Drug Abuse in New South Wales

By K.F.E. Torrington

The drug scene now is constantly coming before the criminal courts of New South Wales. The Supreme Court from time to time hears cases of the drug murders as well as the appeals against convictions and sentences of the District Court in respect of drug trafficking and importing as well as other indictable crimes committed by drug users or drug affected or drug deteriorated persons.

The District Court is the general trial court in New South Wales for drug traffickers whether they be importers or possessors of imported drugs or drug traffickers pursuant to NSW State law proscribing the supplying or possessing drugs. In addition there are the many cases where the offender committing robberies or burglaries claims to be drug affected and to be compelled by an overwhelming craving to buy drugs to maintain a drug habit.

Speaking from my experience as a judge I can say drug cases are only a small part of the work coming before the higher courts. In drug and alcohol conferences where drug use is examined and debated, one would think that the evil of drug abuse overshadows all other criminal activity and is indirectly the cause of most of it. The Higher Courts Criminal Statistics of NSW in 1978 show that of 4076 persons appearing on indictment before the Supreme and District Courts only 286 persons were charged with drug trafficking offences both under Federal and State Laws.

There are no statistics to show how many offenders mainly, persons detected using marijuana and other drugs, possessing drugs for personal use or the implements for using drugs. In 1978, the number of persons appearing or summoned to appear for more serious offences in the Courts of Petty Sessions was 47128 persons yet there was only 3630 persons were dealt with summarily for drug offences. There were also 19,716 drink driving offences.

The relatively low proportion of drug law breaches should be further considered with the traffic law breaches. Many more traffic infringement notices were issued most of which result in payment without further action to bring the offence within the criminal justice system.

These statistics are crude but nevertheless they confirm my general impressions that only a small part of the criminal justice system in New South Wales is directed to drug offences.

In the case of the more serious offences more court time is taken up as a large proportion of drug cases are strongly contested. Often there is a vain hope that despite powerful evidence of drug dealing involvement by the accused that something will turn up so that the drug trafficker will escape the high penalties prescribed by the drug laws.

Legal aid and big drug profits seem to vye with each other in long gladiatorial fights in defending these cases.

His Honour Judge Torrington is a Judge of the District Court of New South Wales. He practised as a barrister-at-law before being appointed as Chairman of Quarter Sessions in 1967. He has presided over many drug trials.

Sometimes there is jury verdict of not guilty despite a strong case for the prosecution. Occasionally a vital witness falters or a police witness is shown to have acted harshly or wrongly. The juries not only apply the law acquiring proof beyond reasonable doubt strictly on prosecution issues but they also want to be sure in their own hearts and consciences to a state of moral certainty that the accused is guilty on the issue of reverse onus of proof in possession cases. They are well aware of the long sentences awaiting the guilty.

My impression derived from presiding in many cases is that in possession cases where the reverse onus of proof applies both as the contents of packages and to knowing the offender was in possession, the jury still wants to be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt of guilt before it will bring in a verdict of guilty. The standard of proof beyond reasonable doubt is so much part of our tradition that the man in the street firmly believes it is a fundamental principle of law despite the clear statements by the parliaments in drug laws.

The chief value of the reverse onus of proof in cases of possession of large quantities of drugs is to require the accused persons to explain to the jury how they came to be in possession of the drugs or to explain that they did not know the drugs were in their possession. They must either give some explanation either by giving sworn evidence or making an unsworn statement. If the accused does not run the gauntlet satisfactorily the risk of conviction is high.

Opium use in New South Wales in the latter part of the 19th century was the subject of critical public debate and condemnation. The existence of opium dens in Sydney with allegations of Chinese and Australian women said to be lying around in a stuporous state became the subject of righteous indignation and condemnation especially by sensational newspapers and journals.

This attitude was often racist and was exacerbated by the reaction of many people to the large influx of Chinese migrants in the gold rush years. Racial hatred of the Chinese flared in places like Lambing Flat now Young with shocking acts of persecution and cruelty towards the Chinese gold prospectors and traders.

The first drug laws were brought in during the 1890s to prohibit opium smoking. Then Federal laws were enacted after a Premier's conference in 1905 to prohibit the importation and use of opium for non medical use. On the other hand the use of opium continued in many proprietary medicines and by way of prescription for therapeutic purposes. Opium had for a long time been used for medical purposes. The derivative morphia, discovered in 1806 had unrivalled pain relieving qualities. Heroin discovered 100 years later had far better pain relieving qualities. Heroin was first thought not to be subject to the addictive quality of morphia. The reverse was the case. For some terminal cases of cancer only heroin can give relief to the sufferer in his final agony.

Drug control laws became much more effective in NSW in 1927 by the introduction of many of the provisions of the British Dangerous Drugs Act, into the Police Offences Amend-

ment (Drugs) Act 1927. This was brought about by the excessive use of cocaine principally by prostitutes in the Darlinghurst and Kings Cross areas.

Criminals were then using cocaine and some groups were exploiting the prohibition of off course betting and the selling of beer in unlicensed premises (sly grog) shops outside restricted hours in NSW (6 am to 6 pm) for selling liquor. This led to violence, gang warfare and criminal behaviour in that part of Sydney and occasionally the suburbs.

I can recall as a boy that the community did not regard starting price off course betting and after hour sales of liquor as true crimes but rather an unfortunate waste of police time. Now we have completely different laws as to liquor trading and a vast number of TAB centres catering lawfully for these activities. Some call it civilised drinking and betting.

The restrictive laws did generate unlawful activities and sustain criminal gangs. It was in these groups that the cocaine use took place. With the new laws for drug control and consorting, the cocaine abuse was not only contained but all practical purposes ended.

Drug offences were almost unknown in NSW when the Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs of 1954 brought about a major change in the international control of Narcotic Drugs. It was adopted by 71 nations including Australia. This was given effect to Australia by amendments to the Customs Act and in NSW by the Poisons Act, 1966 and in particular that part of the treaty:

"that serious offences shall be liable to adequate punishment particularly by imprisonment or other penalties of deprivation of liberty—Article 36(1)".

I recall as a practising barrister prior to my appointment to the Bench in 1967 that drug offences and drug offenders were insignificant in number. Some pharmacists were prosecuted over failing to keep their drug registers properly. Occasionally we would hear of a doctor or nurse working with drugs and becoming addicted. There were a few unfortunate addicts. Their appearance in a magistrate's court always became a news item as a rare and exotic offence. This impression is born out by police arrest statistics.

In the middle sixties the police arrest statistics revealed the development of a completely new situation in offences against the drug laws. The drug cannabis in the form of marijuana achieved sudden and rising popularity. This was the period when the old values of the post war period were being rejected. New social values and divisions were occurring in our society. The crime rates for violent crimes and white collar crime accelerated rapidly at the same time drug use exploded.

Marijuana became the symbol of dissent and the counter culture. It was given respectability by claims mainly by academics that it at least was less harmful than alcohol and tobacco, claims that the establishment enjoyed their vices of alcohol and tobacco and in their hypocrisy denied the young people the simple pleasures of cannabis. It was also the age of the "flower people" most of whom now seem to have disappeared.

There is little doubt that many academics were the guilty men early in the drug explosion in giving an aura of respectability to unlawful drug use.

The magistrates in NSW first bore the brunt of the drug explosion. Their first reaction to the use of cannabis was somewhat draconian. In many cases a prison sentence was handed down for offences for which in these days only a fine would be imposed. On the otherhand scientific opinion as to the harmful effects of cannabis was controversial.

The law and the international treaty made no concession for the alleged benign effect of cannabis use. This controversy still remains unresolved. The main argument in bringing about the reduction informally in penalty for cannabis use is the eloquent plea that alcohol abuse is more harmful both to the user and society than the use of cannabis.

CANNABIS CRIME BEFORE THE HIGHER COURTS

Cannabis dealing came before the District Court in a series of importing cases and plantation cases with imported cannabis in leaf form being replaced by the home grown product. In one case, the grower after processing the finished products in slabs, marked it with an impression of a well known overseas brand. He used a forged brand stamp.

The most noticeable change I have seen over the years has been the increase in size and value of the cannabis transactions. In 1970 I presided over the trial of members of a syndicate attempting to smuggle hashish from India in suitcases using diplomats to carry it through Customs. The hashish would be worth about \$40,000 a trip on the illicit market. I recall a few years later a shipment by another syndicate trying to smuggle from Beirut hashish and cannabis oil worth \$528,000 on the illicit market. I have come to regard consignments of \$500,000 to \$2500,000 as not being exceptional as the consignments grow ever larger. The largest consignment in respect of 4.75 tonnes said to be worth \$27,000,000 to \$46,000,000 on the streets in the illicit market.

CANNABIS SENTENCES

The irony of the law in sentencing cannabis traffickers was that in all the cases I heard up to and including the "Anoa" conspiracy the maximum penalty was set at 10 years prison. The maximum penalty remained unaltered in respect of cannabis in leaf form. When the amendments to federal and state laws increasing maximum penalties to 25 years and 15 years imprisonment were enacted the old penalty of 10 years for cannabis in leaf form was retained, no doubt due to the acceptance of the reality that cannabis in leaf form was smoked by a significant section of the community and was a 'soft' drug.

This anomalous penalty provision for cannabis trafficking resulted that a person bringing into the country a comparatively small quantity of cannabis in the form of hashish or oil, was liable to be sentenced to the maximum sentence of 25 years while the offenders in the "Anoa Conspiracy" bringing in cannabis in leaf form by the ship load were subject to a maximum penalty of 10 years. Many people cannot understand why one of the leaders in "Anoa" conspiracy, Murray Stewart Riley was sentenced to 10 years the maximum while Bessire and Todd Hayes "the American grannies" were sentenced to 14 years for importing hashish and oil. The Customs Act has since been amended to make a commercial dealing subject to life imprisonment.

OTHER FACTORS IN SENTENCING CANNABIS TRAFFICKERS

The cases I have dealt with such as diplomatic passport conspiracy, various Beirut conspiracies and part of the Anoa conspiracy have been examples of persons who were not users, but persons seeking to traffic for gain. To these people must be added some of the plantation farmers. In all these cases the scale of the activity varied. On the other hand large scale drug dealing causes enormous harm to the Australian community whatever the drug may be in promoting unlawful activity in the illicit marketing of the drugs.

A court has to weigh the involvement of the offender in the criminal enterprise as well as the magnitude of the illicit enterprise. There is for consideration the degree of sophistication in the dealing, the question whether there is corruption or attempted corruption of law enforcement officers, the composition and strength of the drug, the difficulty of control by the law enforcement officers and the danger to them in detecting and arresting the offender, finally subjective factors such as the age antecedents and character of the offenders. Again the offender's involvement may be under pressures that are to some extent excuseable. These factors distinguish the suitcase smuggler with a few thousand dollars worth of marijuana in leaf form (buddha sticks) or a few slabs of hashish in a suitcase lining from the hardened drug traffickers. The enterprise of

many hectares under cultivation is very different from the small area that may yield only a light crop to be sold or to be used by a group of amateur conspirators who are also consumers of their own product.

PRESENT SENTENCING OF CANNABIS OFFENDER

The sentencing position in NSW seems to have developed to the situation that cannabis users or persons in possession of cannabis for personal use are not sent to prison any more. They may give conditional discharges with the offence being proved. In most cases where they are convicted they are required to pay a fine by way of penalty.

While cannabis traffickers in a small way are in jeopardy as to their liberty, the position depends on the extent of their involvement, the amount of the drug they have been supplying and above all their criminal history and antecedent character.

Those cannabis traffickers or cultivators clearly involved for gain in a substantial way generally face a long period of imprisonment not exceeding 10 years and in the case of Federal offenders a much longer term if the quantity brings them into the category of being a commercial trader.

There does seem to be a definite trend in the community to regard cannabis use as an offence of forbidden indulgence rather than a true drug offence. On the other hand public opinion seems to be completely set against large scale trafficking or cultivating.

This stern view is taken by the District Court. The numerous judgments of the Court of Criminal Appeal that cannabis traffickers should be dealt with severely are expressed in a series of cases with remarks such as "wherever a drug trafficker came before this Court, he can expect to be dealt with severely" or "Participaters in this traffic must be expected to be sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment".

Within the scope of the maximum prescribed sentence of 10 years this is reflected at present in the sentences of all the courts in the NSW criminal justice system. In the "Anoa Conspiracy" Murray Stewart Riley received a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment, plus the maximum fine of \$4000. He received the largest minimum sentence having regard to Prison Remission Regulations. Three other conspirators the navigator, the ship owner and a man alleged to be substantively involved also received maximum sentences. Two other maximum sentences for crew members of both vessels were reduced to 8 years on appeal.

THE HEROIN EXPLOSION

Arrests for heroin offences started to escalate rapidly in 1970. Probably this is the part of the drug trade where the handling of the drug presents little difficulty as it is highly potent in small quantities. It is most powerful and most addictive. High profits can be made by traffickers operating at all levels of the illicit trade. On the other hand its powerful addictive quality leads addicts to robbery and violence in efforts to maintain the addiction and to placate the overwhelming craving they experience.

There were 3 police arrests for opiate use in 1964, 50 in 1968, 125 in 1969 and 215 in 1970. The number of arrests for opiate indulgence most of which were for heroin grew rapidly to 1239 in 1978.

HEROIN OFFENDERS

Persons using heroin brought before magistrates are now usually directed to treatment. It is extremely rare for such an offender to come before the District Court on appeal, such is the tolerance and assistance given to them in the Magistrates' Courts. This development reflects the concern by the magistrates for heroin addicts many of whom are sick young people.

Heroin users charged with more serious offences are often refused bail or are unable to find bail. The granting of bail to such offenders is frequently followed by their absconding as they lapse back into heroin use. The detention in custody with

regular meals, sleep and exercise in a drug free environment usually brings about dramatic changes in health and appearance when they appear for sentence or trial later. They may not be finally cured but at least they are restored substantially to normal physical health.

In considering court statistics it is an error to assume that courts are more tolerant of heroin trafficking by comparing sentences of cannabis traffickers with heroin pushers and couriers. It is obvious in many cases of lesser heroin trafficking, the offender is often badly addicted, in poor physical health or is being ruthlessly exploited by another trafficker higher up the chain. These factors do not appear in sentencing statistics.

Heroin addicts often come before the courts for other serious crimes such as armed robbery, assaults and robbery and for continual breaking, entering dwelling houses and stealing. Last year during my times sitting in the Darlinghurst Criminal Court House as Listing Judge to set hearing dates I was appalled at the trend in serious cases listed before me to see so many young people charged with serious crimes alleged to have occurred while they were addicted to heroin. This fact does not appear necessarily in statistics. Some also make the claim only to use it as a ploy to seek leniency or sympathy from a jury.

DRUG TRAFFICKERS

Cannabis plantations have been detected in many parts of New South Wales especially in the Murrumbidgee River and the Murray River areas also on the Central Coast, the North Coast and the Tablelands. They obviously supply marijuana to a well organised distribution industry. The present range of penalties with a limit of 10 years results in a range of sentences with the maximum sentence being reserved for the worst cases.

If the offender has not been imprisoned before in NSW he is entitled to a remission of one third the sentence and if previously imprisoned one quarter of the sentence. In addition further remissions of up to 6 days per month may be earned in various ways prescribed by the Prisons Regulations.

The offender must be given eligibility for release on parole before release on remission unless there are exceptional circumstances to refuse to specify a non-parole period. The result is the cannabis grower or trafficker may reasonably expect not to be in custody for more than 4 years probably it will be for a lesser period. He may also be released during his sentence for daily work on work release.

Drug traffickers must weigh this discounting of the prison sanction and the low risk of being detected against the high profits and the rich rewards of drug trafficking.

THE DRUG ADDICT AND DRUG DETERIORATED OFFENDER

The courts in all countries and over the centuries have dealt with persons who have committed crimes and at the time were intoxicated or were deteriorated by indulgence in alcohol.

For a judge, sentencing is always difficult when a person's will power and normal self controls and standards have been undermined by indulgence in drugs or alcohol.

For the more serious crimes, the community's attitudes are severe. The offender must be convicted and severely punished except for the case of murder within the family of an evil and dangerous person abusing his position. For grossly wrong acts, people require the courts to protect them and punish the criminals.

This severe attitude changes completely for lesser crimes particularly crimes that involve only property. For the lesser felonies the courts tend to allow treatment for addicts and to order a recognizance instead of a prison sentence. On the other hand for crimes such as armed robbery the subjective element carries less weight and a sentence must be passed. The position is the same in road cases where death or serious injury is brought about by a motorist driving when adversely affected

by liquor. The community requires prison sentences to be passed in such cases.

All persons who indulge in drugs and alcohol are not criminals. Only the few of them are truly criminals and would have been criminals in any case. This has been asserted by Mr David Gordon, Director of WHOS Foundation in his evidence before one the NSW Parliamentary Committees Upon Drugs.

The assertion that heroin indulgence needs such large sums of money that it can only be financed by criminal activities needs careful examination. The finding of money for indulgence leads to violent robberies in some cases. For serious crimes, heroin indulgence and the urge to satisfy that indulgence no matter how pressing the craving will not be accepted by the community or the victim as an excuse.

The United States Army asserted after the Vietnam War that "heroin addiction stopped at the shore of the South China Sea". Lee Robins L.N., Helzer J.E. et al. (1977 Vietnam veterans three years after Vietnam: how our study changed our view of heroin. 39th Annual Scientific Meeting, Committee on Drug Problems of Drug Dependence, Boston Massachusetts) have shown that 50% of the men addicted in Vietnam did not use heroin at all after their return to the United States and more surprisingly only 12% became addicted. Apart from personality variables there was a major contributing factor of the decreased availability of heroin. Most of all, they had their social checks on behaviour restored including a sense of responsibility not to spend such large sums on indulgence.

On seeing dramatic improvements of offenders denied bail who were said to be heroin addicts I wonder whether that improvement could be maintained by getting young people to accept some of the standards of conduct society let go so easily in the sixties. Certainly there is outstanding success within the therapeutic communities in giving their inmates new social values and responsibilities. The experience in the United States shows that many people addicted to heroin can give up heroin use without treatment.

Until recently I believed from my reading, attending seminars and hearing much evidence in court over the years, that it was practically impossible for heroin addicts to break the heroin habit. They just had to have treatment. I was aware of the good work of the therapeutic communities yet it is obvious they could reach out only to a limited proportion of the addicts so that other users could only be brought back to be useful members of society with methodone maintenance and that success otherwise was rare. The inevitable result was said to be early death for those addicts that failed to be treated successfully.

I certainly have been subjected repeatedly to the submission in court and occasionally psychiatric evidence that the addiction was so powerful that when physical withdrawal occurred the offender became helpless, that his will to observe lawful restraint and normal behaviour was completely overcome by the heroin craving. The number of people adversely affected by drug and alcohol indulgence is obviously considerable.

The Health Commission of NSW in 1979 had a total Drug and Alcohol staff of 197 available for and engaged in Drug Education, Counselling and Treating Programmes in NSW. In addition there are the voluntary and private centres and agencies helping people with drug problems. With the limited success rate in treating addiction one would expect many drug deaths. The small death rate at the Sydney Morgue certainly suggests that a high proportion of the addicts do not die following the *Epidemiology* of fatalities relating to the abuse of Narcotic and Analgesic Drugs in NSW and ACT 1974-1977 -Michael J. Liddy.

Annual Incidence of Deaths, 1974-1977

a) Deaths involving morphine* (alone or together with alcohol or other drugs)

Year:	1974	1975	1976	1977
Deaths:	5	13	37	32

b) Deaths resulting from the abuse of all narcotic analgesic drugs.

Year:	1974	1975	1976	1977
Deaths:	14	16	49	42

c) Deaths of known narcotic drug addicts in which death did not involve a narcotic analgesic drug.

Year:	1974	1975	1976	1977
Deaths:	10	10	16	19

d) Deaths of known narcotic drug addicts, irrespective of cause of death.

Year:	1974	1975	1976	1977
Deaths:	15	17	46	49

*The morphine found or analysis was probably derived from heroin.

This would still be the case after allowing for doctors in other cases excluding drug use from the death certificate.

In some cases, drug indulgence is an act of choice. In some cases more active personal steps could be taken to overcome the physical craving and the psychological dependence. This is a significant factor to be taken into account when reaching a judgment as to the appropriate sentence to pass. Obviously the will to meet physical cravings of drug or alcohol abuse vary from person to person and from case to case.

Sentencing of the drug addict criminal leads to the position where many factors have to be considered. The weight to be given to the various factors must vary with each individual case. Sentencing is only easy when the law prescribes a single sentence such as life imprisonment for murder. In all other crimes the sentence prescribed by the law is the maximum penalty and the courts are required to exercise wide discretions and judgment.

While the Courts will take into account the fact that the offender was materially affected by drug indulgence, the judgment for sentence must involve consideration of factors including:

1. The seriousness of the crime and the harm caused;
2. The part played by the offender;
3. The safety of the community;
4. The prevalence of the offence;
5. The community attitude to the type of offence;
6. The offenders responsibility for his drug indulgence;
7. Whether drug intoxication may be an aggravating factor;
8. His prospects for rehabilitation;
9. The need to deter the offender from further crime but not to punish for a crime he has not committed.
10. The need to deter others;
11. The penalty prescribed by law;
12. The character and antecedents of the offender;
13. The harm to the victim;
14. The attitude of the offender to his misconduct.

This list is not exhaustive. It follows that in the more serious crimes, the objective factors will outweigh the subjective factors. For lesser offences the sentencer has more discretion and can give greater weight to rehabilitation and the overcoming of drug dependence. The appeal courts allow splendid flexibility in sentencing drug dealers and drug affected persons.

One rule is clear in sentencing there is no golden rule or ready reckoner by which it can be easily determined what is the appropriate sentence to pass for a particular offence. With respect to cannabis trafficking I have found that people rationalise by saying that this drug will soon be legalised. On the other hand large scale drug operators do not limit themselves

to the easy profit making in cannabis traffic and are often involved in other illegal activities.

The Seizure Statistics of the Australian Narcotics Bureau show there is steady development of the illicit trading. The seizures show apparent improvement when the figures for certain years are distorted by large seizures. The heroin seizures for 1975 are unduly high for the reason that the international golf bag conspirators were caught. In 1978 there were particularly large seizures of cannabis oil and cannabis. There were the cases of Mercedes Benz Camper Van of the two American women, the ship load of cannabis Buddha Sticks imported in the "Anoa" conspiracy from Thailand and the Tait aeroplane consignment, all of which would also make the seizure figures unduly high.

In New South Wales large plantations are constantly being detected. In some trials over which I presided I was interested to see that the leaf after being dried was being packed in identical calico bags in farm sheds in different parts of the state.

Drug Seizures—Australian Narcotics Bureau

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979 (1.1-30.9)
Opium (gms)	6132	4816	4509	4139	876	4183
Heroin (gms)	5079	5938	15351	11711	17867	25187
Morphine (gms)	279	863	47	14	27	303
Cocaine (gms)	47	338	1561	140	NH	176
LSD (dose units)	5505	9131	1458	1880	895	60
Cannabis oil (gms)	4809	32859	45083	37246	97731	53471
Cannabis (gms)	342405	885476	1226922	703967	7648050	501545

There is a powerful call by the legislature and the community for the courts to pass long sentences to deter trafficking. This will continue as long as the community looks mainly to prison sentences to check drug-trafficking for gain by non user entrepreneurs.

However not all drug traffickers fit the picture of an unscrupulous and evil crime boss or some such similar character. Some persons obviously are members of organised crime syndicates.

I have tried and sentenced young career customs officers and a university scientist for drug crimes. None of these people were users. Most of all I have been concerned seeing young

drug traders and drug couriers at court. Many have been fine young people lured by the attraction of making money easily with a small risk, rationalising that although illegal it was not very wrong. Other judges have dealt with a Health Commission psychiatrist and police officers. In Victoria senior narcotics agents have been sentenced. I have dealt with lifesavers, businessmen, a skilled draughtsman, a former high school captain and the daughter of a senior public servant for smuggling or selling drugs.

Apart from the question of conscience unless there is certainty of detection in the minds of sensible people and in fact a reasonable probability of detection we are drifting into a system of selective justice where only some of the traffickers are being brought to justice.

The call for minimum sentences and generally for higher sentences if acceded to, alone, will probably have no effect on trafficking. In practically every case of drug selling or trading I have seen I doubt whether any of the offenders would have desisted from their criminal behaviour if much higher sentences had been prescribed by the parliaments and if substantial minimum sentences had to be passed. The same applies obviously for the large scale business operator further back in the line of business. Except for this type of trafficker, the community must be careful in the new sentencing laws to be brought down lest we make our sentences acts of cruelty. We must have more detection and a greater certainty of detection.

The problems for the law makers are great as they make the drug laws. The severity of the sentences they are considering writing into the law is small compared to the harm being caused by drug dealers to the community in damaging the lives and health of the weakly indulgent and the promoting of unlawful activity.

The final answer is with the people and in the leadership of the people. The problem is not just medical and legal but much more social and political. There does not appear to be a half way house or compromise in a tolerant society. Selective justice in which we deal severely with those having the misfortune to be detected by law enforcement authorities is not sufficient to bring drug prohibition. As a community we all must participate if we do not want drug indulgence or drug trading both by rejecting drug use as a united community and possibly by yielding some of our traditional civil rights and privileges to ensure drug detection becomes more effective.



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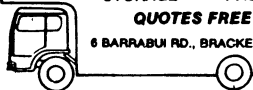
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