

# Criminals first, patients second

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## Document Text

Dear Editor - Re: 'Man pleads guilty to pot-by-post plan' (Guelph Mercury, June 7).

Your article notes lawyer Leora Shemesh saying if Marco Renda pleaded guilty to any drug-related counts he could have lost his federal exemption from marijuana laws.

Funny that; a diabetic child rapist, a white-collar criminal with a heart problem, or a convicted murderer with bladder cancer would never be deprived of their medicine, but a medical marijuana user has to live under the constant threat of medicinal deprivation at the hands of his own government.

What Canadians fail to recognize is that these medical marijuana "licences" we are supposed to carry around amount to nothing less than legislated medical segregation -- in Canada.

Think about that. I mean really think about it. It is perfectly "legal" to treat medical marijuana users like criminals first and patients second.

As federal medical marijuana licence holders, my wife and I, like Renda, have to carry "special papers" to avoid arrest or financial ruin because we have medical conditions. Furthermore, we are strictly forbidden to help other sick people.

Say it a few times out loud: "legislated medical segregation." Ugly, isn't it? We are officially -- legally -- second-class citizens, in a country that isn't supposed to have any.

OK, so it isn't apartheid or the Warsaw ghetto, but this is how big stuff like that starts out: separate us from the rest of the flock so we are easier to pick off later.

Worse yet, sick people have to scrounge for this medicine, then scrounge a mountain of money to fight their own government and police for their rights in court, against a giant with bottomless pockets.

So much for Canada being a just society.

Russell Barth

Federal medical marijuana licence holder, Ottawa

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