

Rapid Change, Exam De-Emphasis Today's Trend, Principal Says

"The purpose of education is changing — it's dangerous to look on the high school as a training program preparing students for specific occupations—technology is changing too fast for that today."

So said Michael Furlong principal of Georgetown District high school in a freewheeling speech at the annual meeting of Georgetown-Red Cross society last week.

Mr. Furlong touched on many points — exams, drugs, working mothers and the new county school system.

About drugs at school — "We know it, the kids know it, and we do what we can, but there are legal technicalities which make it difficult for staff and police."

He stressed that the drug situation is not unique here, nor did he intimate that it was a major problem with most students. "But we can't shut our eyes and pretend it doesn't exist."

About exams — "A curse. They don't do what they're supposed to. As a math teacher I spent most of my time preparing pupils for exams on which they and I were judged. I didn't do as good a teaching job and the pupils didn't learn as much."

At Georgetown this year, pupils may write final exams if they wish. Their marks will be given on June 12, and an opportunity to write exams will then be given if a student wishes.

About working mothers — "I'm not blaming anyone. With the cost of living and mortgage rates, it's almost a necessity. But a good share of our chronic discipline problems comes from upset homes. Some children are almost orphans, with mother and father away from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m."

About the new school setup — "In the long run we should be able to give young people a better deal, with services which, in individual school areas could not supply."

Georgetown's high school enrollment will jump 200 to 1650 by September 1970. An addition, capable of housing 1900, will use its extra space for Grade 8 students in the meantime.

About education concepts — "The world's knowledge doubled in 1700, and again in 1900 — doubled again in 1950 and again in 1960. A stereotyped block of knowledge is no longer possible like it used to be school."

He quoted J. W. Singleton, Halton director of education, as saying the school's job is to turn out a socially mature and responsible individual who can think for himself.

Mr. Furlong said that exams should be more and more downgraded as a means of evaluating a student, and without them a teacher can do a better teaching job, and assess his results more accurately. It has never been possible to even arrive at

a marking system for the old departmental exams which gave every candidate the same opportunity, he said.

Except for English, which is vital to our communication, he said that subject matter in high school is more a training in discipline and reasoning, and that this applies even to the trade courses.

"Education is undergoing rapid and dramatic changes," he said "and teachers and parents are caught in the middle today. But changes shouldn't be made just to be modern, there must be reasons for them."

It is more difficult to be a parent today than even ten years ago, he observed. If parents haven't prepared their children with a good sense of morals, there can be trouble. Pressure of drugs and alcohol is really intense.

He said he gives students an opportunity to make as many decisions as possible in extracurricular activities, but in the classroom it is "teacher's choice." But a principal must retain the right of veto.

"I don't expect kids not to make mistakes — adults do," he said. "I do everything possible to treat them as human beings, to let them make controlled mistakes, while providing the best in teaching and physical facilities."

COUNCIL BRIEFS

● Council on Monday okayed the issuing of building permit to Ishbel Construction, for an extension to the Moore Park shopping plaza.

● Complying with a request from the Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Society, will ask Canada Manpower to vacate the ambulance garage, as soon as possible.

● Council was informed the Credit Valley Conservation levy had dropped from \$11.355 last year to \$7.361, this year. The levy is now based on equalized assessment, while previously it was based on population within the watershed.

● E.A. Mitchell was authorized to prepare agreements and negotiate with the owners of land along Maple Ave., affected by the reconstruction of the road.

Comedy Aplenty Promised In Little Theatre Show

A light comedy set in an English vicarage's Georgetown Little Theatre's choice for their March 21, 22 and 23 production.

"See How They Run" has many familiar comedy situations, including one where an avowed teetotaler spins out a close with two supposed clergymen. Another comedy standby, the chase, is re-enacted with four clergymen appearing and disappearing, at unexpected moments.

The vicar, Rev. Toop, is played by Ron Hunt, and his wife an ex-actress by Vera Macdonald. She is visited by Corporal Win- ton, Ron Hill, who had toured

with her in "Private Lives." Coincidentally, Ron Hill and Vera Macdonald just finished playing opposite each other in the Little Theatre's production of "Private Lives."

The Bishop is Gord Hunt, another vicar Bob Thornley, and an escaped prisoner, also dressed as a vicar, is Des Nicholls. John Bew plays a policeman, Cathy Spicer a cockney maid, and Edna Ferguson, the added spinster.

The play has been staged all over England and the United States, since its premiere in England in 1947.

Chris Fisher is producer and director.

DANGER SEASON

Georgetown police have asked The Herald's assistance in warning children to stay off ice and away from fast flowing streams.

"This is the time of year when children are attracted to the rising streams, and when they pose the greatest threat to safety," a police department spokesman told The Herald. "A tragedy can be prevented if parents impress on their children now to stay away from these seasonal death traps."

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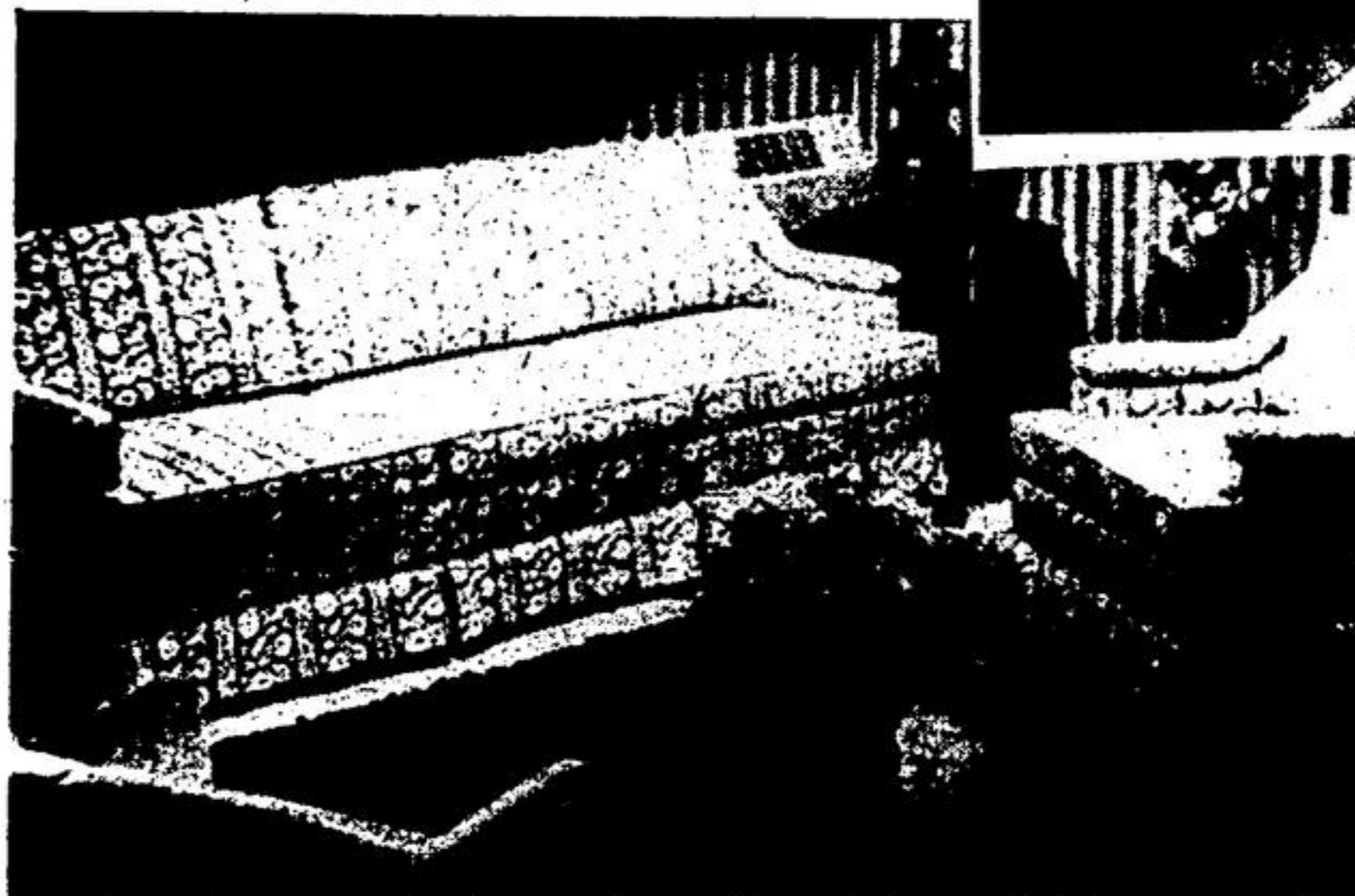
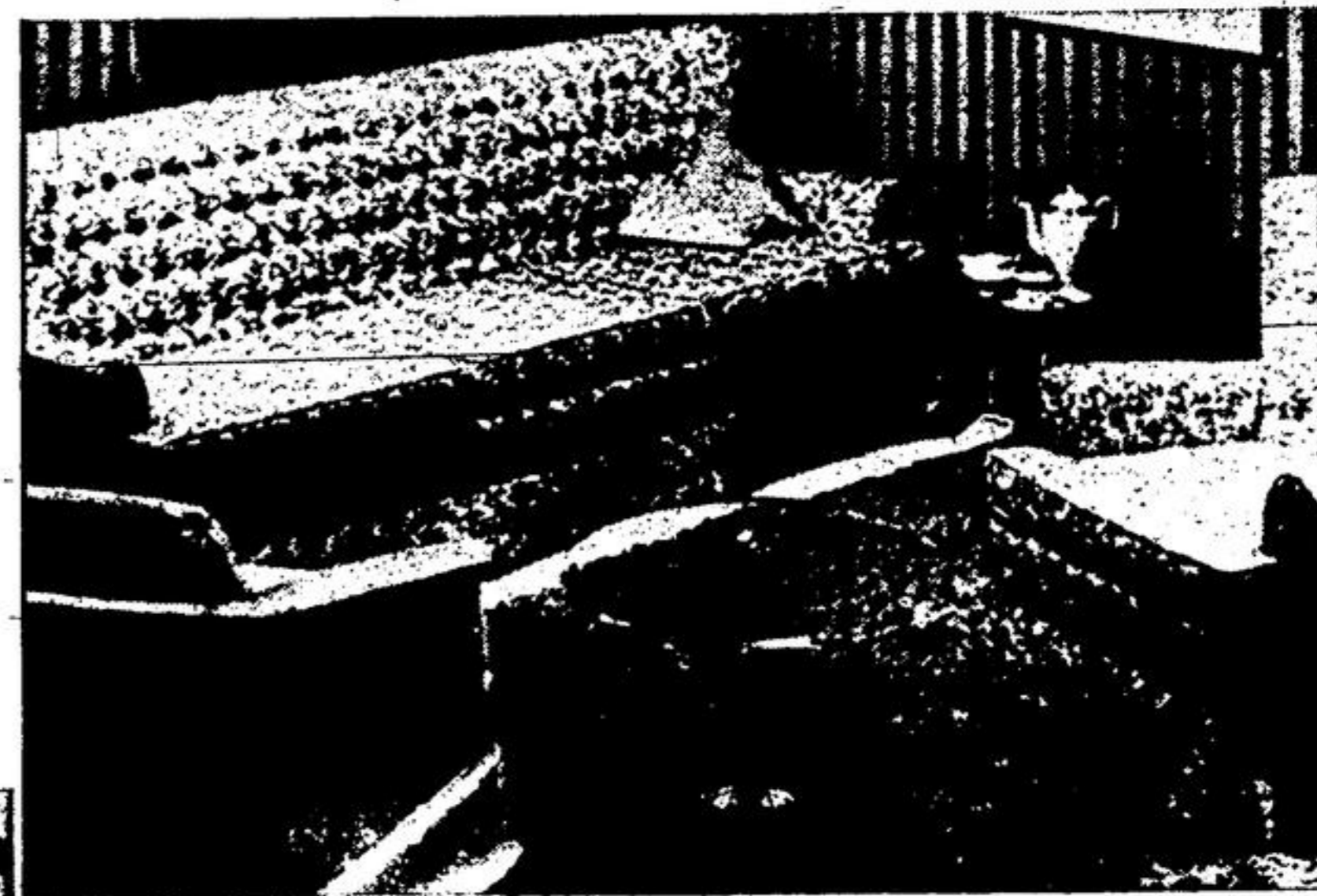
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