

Today's educators are ill-equipped to stop drug abuse

Last week's revelation that an average of one in four Halton high school students regularly use illegal "soft" drugs will no doubt have considerable impact upon parents of local young people, but we hope their response in no way resembles that of the Ontario Headmasters Association.

Drug abuse - no matter how slight or how severe - is a product of a greater evil, one which permeates our faltering educational system and underlines society's failure to gear that system to changing global conditions.

But informed of the rise in drug-related problems in their schools, principals across the province have elected to follow their most basic, vengeful instinct and are appealing for stronger legal penalties against abusers.

In a social climate where the casualness of drug use is itself symptomatic of youth's declining respect for "old guard" authority - the police, politicians, educators - why battle the blaze with showers of gasoline.

The action proposed by high school principals is an open threat to young people, warning them they'd better compromise their idealism and yield to authority, however mistaken it might be, or else be deprived of their freedom.

Only the recent warnings that prolonged use of cannabis may effect a hormonal imbalance is enabling the federal government to continue procrastinating on its stated intention to decriminalize the drug. Since the 1972 LeDain Commission, the need to lessen legal penalties for personal use of marijuana and its derivatives has become apparent to many organizations in authority.

However risky long-term use may appear at this point, decriminalization is generally accepted as a preferable situation to the current, ongoing tragedy which gives so many otherwise responsible young people a criminal record for the rest

of their lives. Decriminalization will remove the stigma of marijuana as a "narcotic" (the medical profession agrees it is not) and the stigma of its possession as a "felony" (the legal profession agrees it should not be so). In itself, however, decriminalization will not resolve the drug abuse problem.

Drug use and abuse, like vandalism, is a by-product of an educational system built atop a dangerous faultline. The fissure represents stress on a system that continues to emphasize high academic standards in subjects that can only be considered irrelevant to young people about to encounter rising inflation and unemployment and, worse, the threat of global conflict.

To the deficit of generations still to come, we retain an educational system that matured for the most part in the complacent and contented 1950s, before parental leniency, before the politically turbulent '60s, before the illegal war in Viet Nam and the "secret" war in Cambodia and the threat of war in the mid-east.

But instead of strengthening the system's foundation by pouring some up-to-date perspective into the fissures, those who administer our high schools want to increase the pressure on the faultline. They would attempt to bind the two halves together forcibly and dare them to spring apart.

Let those parents who are alarmed at the new statistics take the only worthwhile action themselves, in their own homes. There, through much love, understanding and open-mindedness, and through much coaching and encouragement, the flaws in our educational system will begin their healing process.

In a world where the negative "atheism" of fatalists might be replaced with an optimistic strategy with which to cope with the modern world, drug abuse would no longer be a problem.



Boost Commons' TV ratings, but reform still low priority



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

In our continuing preoccupation with constitutional reform, it would be a pity if we forgot about parliamentary reform. It not only has all the boring qualities of constitutional reform, we've been talking about it even longer.

It's only been in the last 15 years or so that we have been taking a serious run at overhauling the British North America Act - just an instant flash when compared with the marathon efforts made to overhaul Parliament. Why, records show that Sir John A. Macdonald was concerned about the rules of Parliament not being contemporary enough.

And since then there hasn't been one prime minister who ignored the problem. On the other hand, there haven't been many prime ministers who solved the problem either.

There is no point in retracing the dreary details of our parliamentary reform efforts - one reason being that no one would bother reading them - but if we just go back to 1957 we will find that John Diefenbaker expressed a single-minded determination to "make

Parliament more effective, while preserving its traditions." However apart from installing a public address system, along with simultaneous translation, little was done. His government ran out of time.

BITTEREFFORT

Then it was Lester Pearson's turn - about six years after his government was elected - and we still haven't heard the last of that effort. Some changes were made, but only after bitter debate, and there are still opposition charges that the Pearson government emasculated Parliament by showing everything off to committees.

When Pierre Trudeau came to power, he had all sorts of refreshing ideas for reform, including the classic promise of making the Senate more relevant. By the time his government was defeated last year, the whole messy business had been conveniently forgotten.

In came the Joe Clark government, and with it came a fresh outburst of reform ideas. Parliamentary committees were to be given new strength, including research staffs, and they would operate much like American congressional committees as they undertook investigative assignments. There would also be changes so that back-bench MPs could propose legislation that would come to a vote. The issue of capital punishment would be handled this way.

Again, the government ran out of time.

With the return of the Trudeau government came a new House leader - Yvon Pinard. And he not only had plans to overhaul Parliament, he

wanted to turn it into a better television studio, so that Canadians would remain glued to their sets while the House was in session.

MANY IDEAS

Some of the ideas in Pinard's mind: The abolition of night sittings so that MPs can "live like other human beings." Commons speeches would be shortened to 15 minutes from 40 minutes, forcing MPs to stick to the topic at hand, and thus making better television. Votes would be scheduled for particular days so that MPs wouldn't be forced to hang around on the off-chance the division bells might ring. And, finally, the House would sit for only four days a week instead of five, giving MPs more opportunity to talk with their constituents.

The only immediate reaction from the Conservatives came from Walter Baker, their House leader. He worried aloud that a four-day work week might set an example for the rest of the country.

That was two months ago, and there has been scarcely a word on the subject since then.

I called Pinard's office to see when we could expect some action, and I was told that "we would like to clear up our backlog of legislation first." And I was further told there was no point in calling back too quickly "because the backlog goes back two or three years." Parliamentary reform, it seems, is not a priority item with the present government.

And I was so sure we would have an exciting new television format for our fall viewing pleasure, I should have known better.

Furor over 'Tin Drum' ban takes NDP to nearest cinema



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

This week, it was the turn of the NDP caucus here to trot off to watch a private screening of the controversial Oscar-winning German film *The Tin Drum*.

The movie has yet to be shown publicly in Ontario, with the promoters and the Ontario Theatres Branch squabbling over how much should be cut.

In the Legislature both opposition parties have been trading charges with Consumer and Commercial Relations Minister Frank Drea, who is responsible for the Theatres Branch and its censorship board, about how and why this is happening.

So the NDP members decided to go en masse to see for themselves what the fuss was about.

All this action, mind you, revolves around three cuts involving children in sexual scenes totalling less than two minutes out of a 142-minute movie.

At first the director reportedly refused all deletions to his celluloid masterpiece, presumably because the damage would be irreparable, a position around which Toronto's artistic types quickly rallied.

MUCH NOISE

Naturally it also produced gobs of publicity for *The Tin Drum*, which is another of these European philosophic movies that few would otherwise go to see.

Now the word is that the director is willing, as a kind of compromise, to accept one cut of 25 seconds.

Whether his stand is one of principle, or solely for publicity purposes, it is all very reminiscent of suspicions voiced by Theatres Branch manager Don Sims last year that "many times the board and the media are used to promote films."

If so, the play certainly worked, at least in Toronto, where the kaffeeklatsch ended up on the front page of the *Globe and Mail*, and created a major stir in the House.

Preventing some misuse is a tough chore, partly because film censorship is such a subjective thing. Any cut can likely be argued for or against if one wants to try hard enough.

Sims admitted to the committee that he defines community taste as much by impression as anything, relying on everything from letters-to-the-editor to just talking to people.

Still, the basic decision is simple. Either we pass all films, or we (potentially) censor all films.

Opponents of censorship argue instead for a classification system, restricting different types of films to different kinds of audiences.

Drea called that the O for obscene, W for weird, and P for pornographic method of judging movies and swore it would never come to Ontario.

And no question exists that those categories would be filled by such as child pornography, snuff films or the sex life of Christ.

BETTER WAY

Who would want that? So if one accepts the necessity for censorship, the question then reduces to a matter of degree and competence.

Speculation here is that the Censorship Board's make-up will be broadened and the review system modified to "more accurately" reflect and define what community standards really are.

Anti-censorship advocates think that will make judgments more liberal. But if it really reflects the community the likelihood is that standards will become even tighter.

Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO-Mr. and Mrs. Horace Coleman are the new proprietors of the former Steamer's Inn, Main Street restaurant and bus depot. They took over ownership of the business last week from Wheldon Emmerson. The business was formerly owned for a short time by Bob Caldwell and before that by the William H. Long family.

When Mr. and Mrs. Claude Hunt of Detroit, Michigan, visited in town last weekend, it was a happy reunion for two brothers who had not seen each other since Mr. Hunt left England in 1912. They were visiting with Mr. and Mrs. William Chaplin and Mr. and Mrs. V.J. Vardigan who are here on a visit from England.

It certainly has been hot and dry although not quite as bad as last year. At this time last year, we were at the 90 mark. The rain of .35 inches on Saturday was two and a half times the total for the whole of June last year.

TWENTY YEARS AGO-Don't spill your sassaparilla if Hugh O'rian, TV's Wyatt Early, sashays up and greets you with a friendly "Howdy Pardner" at the rodeo Saturday. It could happen. The Georgetown Lions, sponsors of this rodeo have been trying all week to secure the handsome TV lawman for the spectacular Western Week climax, and prospects look good.

A long-awaited event in Georgetown will take place Sunday at 2 p.m. when first sod is turned for the new hospital. It is hoped that the Hon. Matthew Dymond, provincial minister of health, or a senior representative of his department will be present for the ceremony.

Georgetown's industrial picture has been dealt a "blow" in an announcement by Sykes Tool Corporation officials this week that the plant near the town's eastern boundary will be shut down. In a letter to Sykes employees, the corporation says that pending the consideration of future plans and policy, the present engineering activities will come to a halt on or about June 30th. The shut down will affect some 45 employees.

Dr. and Mr. McAllister, 50 Main Street North, are attending the 50th anniversary celebration of his 1910 graduating class of doctors at the University of Toronto.

Difficulty is still experienced by the town in getting compensation insurance for members of Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Association. Unlike volunteer firefighters, who are included in legislation governing the Workmen's Compensation Board, there is nothing on the provincial books to cover volunteer ambulance men.

CHCH TV's Captain Andy will be in town Saturday visiting members of the Georgetown Junior Fire Brigade. He'll arrive at the fire hall early Saturday evening for a grand tour of the town aboard one of the Georgetown Fire Department Trucks.

W.G. Davis, MPP-Peel, announced today that the government of Ontario has approved two grants to the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. The Terra Cotta Conservation Area, 310 acres of Esquesing and Chinguacousy Townships will, due to a government grant of \$7,750,000 (50 per cent of the estimated cost) be developed this year.

TEN YEARS AGO-You can't keep a good man down. Charles Kelly Browne of Acton got up and walked Thursday night at his own 100th birthday party. A week earlier he was in hospital, campaigning to get home in time to whoop it up on his 100th birthday. His formula for longevity? "Hard work, good living, and lots of cigars."

Hints of a possible plebiscite on cocktail lounges in December was made Monday by council. But the backers, Reeve Wm. Hunter and Coun. Wm. Smith, withdrew in the face of violent objection from Mayor Wheldon Emmerson. The mayor said it would be a battle of wets against dries and is a matter which should have much discussion before coming to the voting stage.

Halton County Separate School teachers became the first teachers' group in the county to reach a contract settlement with a board of education. About 70 of the board county's 315 separate school teachers ratified by a vote of 90 per cent the agreement reached last week between their negotiators and Halton County Separate School Board.

About 200 homes in three townships were without electric power last Wednesday after a hydro pole and transformers were smashed in a truck accident. North Halton OPP said a dump truck was pulling a homemade trailer when the trailer became unhooked and smashed into a hydro pole on the 7th Line of Esquesing south of Ballinlad. The pole was sheared off. An Ontario Hydro official said about 200 residents in Esquesing, Erin and Chinguacousy Township were without power until 4 p.m.

The fact that the open house is held twice yearly at ARC Industries at Hornby, doesn't decrease the visitors. A large crowd wandered through the workshop May 28 watching the 14 trainees at their jobs and buying products made there.

The most recent Grand Jury inspection of Halton County Jail recommended magazines provided for prisoners should be restricted to those not dealing with crime, sex, gambling or detective stories.

One Georgetown teen is doing more than talking about non-returnable bottle problem. Thirteen-year-old Lynne Melcombe of 60 Langstone Crescent has written to the major soft drink companies, MP Bud Whiting and MPP Jim Snow, Premier John Roberts and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau asking them to take action to halt the trend to non-returnables.

The Golden Horseshoe Dragway on the 5th Line, north of Highway 7, will be limited to three racing meets a week, according to a proposed bylaw, under discussion by Esquesing Council.

ONE YEAR AGO-Halton regional council has approved a capital budget for 1979 allocating nearly \$7 million to road work, sewer construction and hospital and police projects, as well as a \$22 million forecast covering similar projects slated for completion before 1984. Although the 1979 capital budget and 1980-83 forecast had already been sanctioned by the region's administration and public works committees in the amount of \$16,550,000, three major revisions made by council last Wednesday increased the overall total to \$29,011,928.

The imminent loss of three of Acton's seven doctors isn't worrying the Halton Health Council; chairman Terry Balnes said the subject of the doctors leaving Acton at the end of June wasn't even raised during recent talks with the Minister of Health because as far as the council can judge, there is no cause for alarm.

Halton Regional Police Chief Ken Skerrett has resigned from his job as chief to become a consultant with the force, but will continue to receive his present salary until he is eligible for retirement. The resignation, which was effective June 1, stirred up a minor scuffle at Halton Regional Council when Oakville councillor Laurie Mannell accused the police commission of making the former chief a scapegoat for its own mistakes.



Letter from the Editor

Paul Dorsey

In pursuit of perks

I've commented previously about the strange bits of mail that float across my desk, collectively painting a remarkable picture of this world out there, beyond formerly Georgetown.

This past week cometh two invites, one by phone, one by mail, of an extraordinary nature worth commenting upon. Both were from Metro's entertainment community, one offering a celebrity and one a cause celebre.

From the folks who'll be bringing The Willie Nelson Event to Rock Hill Park not far from here June 23 came a (solicited) invitation to meet Wolfman Jack, who, as emcee, will be howling introductions at the WNE, amid the dramatic rises and falls of the Thornhill Golf and Country Club (chosen, I suppose for its location midway between Rock Hill and Bloor and Yonge).

Sports editor "Pipecleaner" Clairmont and I arrived too late for the suds, grub, and grins that apparently impressed the Toronto media so much, but we did catch the radio wild man (who looks more like a bear these days than a wolfman) toasting one of his patented rap 'n' howl promotional plugs onto a cassette tape. Mr. Jack then climbed aboard a limousine and away he went, pondering perhaps, the demise of disco or his sagging ratings on Midnight Special.

Clairmont graciously accepted his token canvas bag containing one WNE brochure, one Willie Nelson caricature and one Wolfman Jack publicity photo, jogged back to the car, and we were off, bound, it turned out, for greater glories.

The other invitation came unsolicited from Stephen Chesley Associates, the publicity firm that handles "Never Trust an Honest Thief".

Our friend Stephen must be handling a hot potato too, because his press passes allowed one entry to a private screening of "The Tin Drum", which is expected to remain at the bottom of Frank Drea's annual "ten worst" lists from now on. The film's producers reportedly want newspaper editors across the province to see for themselves that Mr. Drea's reasons for banning the movie are unfounded.

The screening was this past Monday and, given the time, our no-longer-esteemed sports editor and myself had planned to attend. More pressing schedules this week prevent further comment. My review - or my excuses for staying home - next week.



What on earth, you may well ask, is pop celebrity Wolfman Jack doing on the editorial page of The Herald? The 58's favorite deejay was among the recent "perks" dropped into the lap of Herald editor Paul Dorsey, arriving in Toronto to promote the upcoming Willie Nelson country and western concert at Rock Hill Park, which he'll emcee later this month. His fangs may have been replaced by dentures, but our editor found that the Wolfman's still pretty much a pain in the neck. (Herald photo)