

Headmasters' motion not 'vengeful' - Furlong

To the editor of The Herald: I feel obliged to respond to your editorial "Today's educators are ill-equipped to stop drug abuse" (June 11).

In my opinion, your piece is misleading, unfair, and factually incorrect. Such ill-considered writing does little to enhance your newspaper's image, and offers little to help the school or the community to deal effectively with the blight of drug abuse.

You make confident reference to the "response of the Ontario Headmasters Association", but it appears evident that you have not read the position of the Ontario Secondary School Headmasters Council. That position is clearly stated in the document "The Issue of Marijuana - a headmaster's perspective", which was released for publication in February.

Instead of expressing informed opinion on the problem of drug abuse, your editorial is just another attack on the educational system and the teachers in it.

Since your article fails to do so, I feel I must point out a few things for you and to your readers.

First, I must state that it is not just educators who must face the problem of drug abuse. You appear to suggest that only students are involved in drug abuse, and that it occurs only in a school setting. Perhaps the fact that the school organization provides a very convenient collection of people for those wishing to study drug use and abuse, would lead one to assume that schools are the only settings for the drug scene.

Society as a whole, and each individual in society must share the responsibility for coping with the drug problem. It cannot be left just to the schools and the police. Parents must be particularly involved.

I have carefully reread the headmasters' position. I can find no part of it which reflects a "vengeful instinct". I see no "appeal for stronger penalties against abusers". I can identify nothing which one could consider an attempt to "battle the blaze with showers of gasoline".

Further, I wonder if you could show me how we have voiced "an open threat to young people", in what ways have we caused them to

"compromise their idealism", or of what freedom we propose to "deprive" them? I would also invite you to define how you relate idealism to drug abuse.

The principals of Ontario are concerned about their students. Most of us have had a glimpse of the unhappy consequences and ugliness associated with drug abuse by young people. Most of us are aware that conclusive scientific evidence is being produced almost daily - evidence which shows that the effects of marijuana and other cannabis products are more harmful in both the long and short term than most of us had suspected.

I am proud that the headmasters' publication provides a clear picture of the drug situation in the schools; I am proud that we have made a strong recommendation to government to be cautious of the possible harmful consequences before changing legislation pertaining to drugs.

We have not, as you imply,

opposed removing cannabis from the Narcotic Control Act. In fact, we have recommended placement under the Food and Drug Act.

We do oppose any action which would suggest that society should condone the use of cannabis. This appears to differ with your view, which seems to say we should accept the present situation and through love and understanding, accommodate ourselves to the inevitable.

I feel we, in this school, have attempted to deal with users in a reasonable, understanding manner. However, I will deal with "pushers" - should I have the occasion - as harshly as the law allows, and I feel no need to apologize for that attitude.

If I have misunderstood any part of your editorial, I am sorry. But I was most disappointed on reading it. Yours truly, M.J. Furlong, Principal, Georgetown District High School.



HULA HANG-UP

Kristin seems unsure of what to do next with this hula hoop. She was one of the children who enjoyed themselves at the Maple Nursery School picnic Thursday. Parents and children gathered for a picnic lunch and summer activities at Cedarvale Park in the sunshine.

(Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

Golf cart, gas stolen last week

An electric golf cart valued at \$2,000 was stolen from the Georgetown Golf and Country Club earlier this week.

Halton Regional Police later recovered the cart a short distance from the club, which is located on the Tenth Line.

A resident from outside Acton reported the theft of 40 gallons of gasoline from a

pump on his property. A small amount of candy was all that was taken in a break-in at Smallwood Acres.

Editor's reply

EDITOR'S NOTE: We stand corrected regarding the Headmasters Association's stand on cannabis control and penalties to users, and apologize to the Association. However, we take exception to the reader's other remarks concerning the intent of our editorial.

We believe that since the parents of today's abusers were themselves never taught how to cope with the rapidly fluctuating moods of our times, their children will grow old, all the while ignorant of what proper steps to take in their own parenthood.

Inherent in our editorial is the message that today's parents must somehow teach their children how to avoid the socially and spiritually poisoning lines of thought to which drugs become a reassuring, if short-term antidote. In the face of global holocaust - and no one can deny such a possibility - the task seems staggering.

The bottom line? Let's stop chasing the pushers and concentrate on teaching our kids to cope without dope.

As stated last week, drug abuse is a "by-product" of the main problem, which neither the schools nor many parents at home are at this point equipped to handle.

Certainly the drug abuse issue is not confined to the schools, and the teachers themselves hold only a fraction of the responsibility for its increases over recent years.

'Scot' wins at Games

The Canadian Cancer Society will benefit from proceeds in a raffle held at the Games Saturday by the Sons of Scotland. Jim Mac Lean of Toronto held the winning ticket, earning his kin a dressed Scottish doll to which was attached \$25.

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Hydro to throw switch

Ontario Hydro's ready to throw the switch on the Bruce to Milton transmission corridor.

The first 500,000-volt line built between the Bruce nuclear complex on Lake Huron and the Milton switching station on Highway 401 will go into service this Saturday following several weeks of line stringing.

Hydro announced this week that one circuit of the line, which crosses Halton Hills' Fifth Concession, will be activated that day, and

the other the following Monday.

"At 500 kilovolts, the maximum in the system, this new line will enable Hydro to transmit low-cost bulk power from the Bruce plant more reliably and more economically," according to Jim Redmond, manager of transmission utilization.

Part of the line, between Bruce and Belwood Junction southwest of Orangeville, was activated two years ago with a connection to the 230-kV system there, but the lower voltage meant sub-

stantial amounts of cheap power were sometimes "locked in" at Bruce according to Hydro. Completion of the line to Milton will reportedly reduce this possibility.

The complete line is 175 kilometres long and consists of 737 towers 50 metres high on a 76-metre-wide right-of-way. Its estimated final cost is \$88 million.

Clean-up and restoration of the right-of-way, including fence repair and removal of access roads and culverts, will continue through the summer.

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