

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Letters to the Editor

Education and Minorities

Dealing With Source, Only One Step Towards Reduction

President Reagan's decision to send in U.S. Military personnel to assist the Bolivian government in eradicating cocaine laboratories in that country is a positive step in an effort to reduce the flow of the illicit drug into the United States. Bolivia is the world's leader in processing cocaine.

The administration has committed 160 U.S. pilots, equipment, and support personnel to assist 100 Bolivian national anti-drug police officers known as "leopards".

President Reagan should be applauded for assisting a fragile government and its citizens who are captured by these narcotic traffickers. However, just dealing with the source will not stop the problem of cocaine abuse in the United States. The administration must do more to educate the public on the danger of

concocting and other drugs. Presently, this country is doing very little to reduce the demand for the illicit drug.

The Department of Education has an annual budget of \$18 billion. Of this amount, only \$3 million is allocated for education in drug prevention. This total is far less than the \$100 million dollars the administration will give the "contras" fighting to overthrow the Nicaragua government.

If this nation is serious about impeding the flow of drugs into this country, more money must be allocated to drug education programs. By educating the public, going to the source, protecting our borders, and having sound law enforcement policies, then and only then will the large demand for drugs be reduced.

I have taught school in Portland for eight years. I am constantly amazed at how some students are labeled learning disabled. Some teachers are threatened by students who aren't robots and docile. Therefore, these students are labeled as being unruly, and, having behavior problems, they are started on an early journey to failure, not only in school but life. These students are shunted to the back of the room and never challenged to give their best. The teacher is so threatened by the active child that he or she starts to create and devise ways to appease the student by allowing him or her to do anything he or she wants, as long as the student doesn't disturb the class. It is my contention that teachers who can't command respect in a classroom and challenge each and every student in his or her class to be the best person he or she can be are depriving that student of an opportunity to be a productive citizen.

If there is a disruption and disorder in the classroom, it is the responsibility of the teacher to set the tone of what will and what will not be accepted in the classroom. One has to start with the principle of mutual respect by setting guidelines and rules that are adhered to by everyone in the class. In other words, one should lead by example. If I as a teacher am important, then my students are as important, if not more so. Everybody should be addressed by their name, or something appropriate and not demeaning, such as "young man," or "young lady." There are a thousand ways to ask someone to be quiet rather than saying "shut-up," which is antagonistic. If my values and my culture are important to me, I as a teacher am obligated to become as knowledgeable as I can about students' values and their culture. Teaching just doesn't pertain to the 3 Rs. We are molders of lives. Our expectations and, sometimes, demands on students related to feeling good about themselves, respecting others, and giving their best at all times is an obligation.

I taught a group of sixth and seventh grade students last year who were supposedly learning disabled. Initially, I could see I was in for a rough time, but I didn't feel threatened. I welcomed the challenge. Initially, these students were defiant and resistive. Some told me what they weren't going to do and where I could go. I was still persistent. I could see these students weren't incapable of learning. They had learned what they had been taught by others: If you don't disturb the class, I won't expect any work from you. And here I was saying, you will not disturb the class, and I expect your best effort everyday. I told the students I knew it seemed hard, but they owed it to themselves to do their best in every phase of their lives. And it was my obligation as a teacher to assist and expect them to be the best they could be. These kids were street-wise beyond their years. They knew the name and words to evey record on the chart. They could recite the names of sports stars and give statistics related to age, college attended, runs, points, touchdowns scored, consecutive games played, or who won the last Superbowl or N.B.A. playoff. It was my contention that anyone who could do all of these things and pronounce names such as Kareem Abdul Jabbar can't be learning disabled. Thus, the students and I started on our journey of learning. I promised them that if they would put forth

the effort to become better human beings in every respect, I would guarantee that they would like the new product better than the old one. Gradually they began to ask others to be quiet instead of shut-up, or if they slipped and said shut-up, they would say excuse me. There was still an occasional four-letter word blurted out, almost immediately followed by "excuse me," or "I'm sorry." The name-calling dwindled to a minimum. The students were evolving from the defiant, resistive group that I initially encountered to a group who had become enthusiastic about their accomplishments in class or what their scores were on the last test.

Kids are a product of what we as grownups teach them. If we convey to them that there will be rules, guidelines and expectations, they will respond in kind. As I told my students last year, if you have a teacher who doesn't expect you to give your best, that teacher doesn't have your best interest at heart and is really depriving you of a chance to succeed in life. I had those expectations for my students last year and will continue to do so in the future.

Last year was one of my most challenging, yet rewarding, years as a teacher due to the fact that I was associated with a group of young men and women who were labeled learning disabled, but who had never been challenged to do their best. I even had a few students make the Honor Roll after moving into regular classroom situations. We actually threw away the fourth and fifth grade books and used the sixth and seventh grade books and became proficient in using them. To those young men and women I'd like to say, "Full speed ahead, I know you can, I know you can".

We as teachers have an obligation to our students. And that obligation consists of helping students with their self-esteem, respecting the rights and property of others, having expectations and goals, and accepting nothing less than giving their very best. This is not only the job of school, but of the home, the school and the student. Sometimes students come to us not having mastered all of these skills. That doesn't give us the right as teachers to judge, demean, or give up on students who don't have or haven't perfected all of these skills. We as educators must bite the bullet and persevere and assist students in becoming a whole person. We will either pay now by being caring, loving, respecting, and having expectations that they know we are dedicated to, or pay later by paying more taxes to support more welfare and build more jails. Our kids are our most important product. We owe it to our students to help them be the best they can be. Let's get on with it.

There is a story about education in its early stages. Socrates gathered a group of young men around him and gave them everything he had to give. Education is reciprocal; you give it, you get it back ten fold. Let us as teachers start preparing the students we teach for the confrontations they are to face tomorrow.

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"A Scapegoat Mentality"

After reading the article of 6/25/86, "Overt Acts Of Racism On The Increase In U.S.," by Brother Jerry Garner, I'm inclined to believe many so-called christian caucasians accept the basic assumptions of racism, because it offers a certain psychological gratification to belong to the so-called "master race." For even in the midst of filth and failure, ignorance, illness and poverty, one could still feel a part of the so-called master race that rules the world and, thus, always feels higher than the conquered heathen, Nigger or so-called Negro.

Rogers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific," the famous musical of 1949, has an obscure song, rarely heard, called "Carefully Taught". The lyrics go:
You've got to be taught to hate and fear
You've got to be taught from year to year
It's got to be drummed in you dear little ear
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made
And people whose skin is a different shade
You've got to be carefully taught.
You've got to be taught before it's too late
Before you are six, or seven or eight
To hate all the people your relatives hate
You've got to be carefully taught.

The rise to power of Hitler, desperately using racism to further his global dominance, to place blame for all the ills of Germany on millions of people, including Jews subsequently murdered in Dachau, Auschwitz, Buchenwald, surely is an adequate example to us that the present racism carried to that extreme in this country will develop into destruction of Blacks in genocidal proportions, as witnessed by the cuts in welfare, housing for the poor, medical care, even to the extent that victims of unemployment may have to resort to crime or suffer extreme hunger.

It is time this nation grant Blacks freedom and equality or invite catastrophe! The corporate rulers of the U.S. and their political servants have imposed institutionalized racism on fifty million citizens of Afrikan descent. Institutionalized racism, like Apartheid, is good business for corporate Amerika. We must attack

the entire ideological framework in which the so-called christian klan mentality grows. The so-called christian klan has never disappeared from our national life. It keeps rising again, like a cat with nine lives, because we have not yet eradicated the soil, the ideology, in which it grows. That ideology is racism, which has poisoned the minds of so-called christian caucasian people and has caused the poor and working-class caucasians again and again to work against their own best interests. We live at a time when our society is really falling apart. In this situation, it has become quite obvious that so-called christian caucasoids who are running this system are simply not willing—and perhaps not able—to make fundamental changes that are necessary to make this society function in a way that would meet the needs of its people. And if you are running a society that is not working for most of its people, and you are not willing to make changes that would alter that circumstance, you don't have but one other choice; You've got to find ways to keep people under control.

If we understand all this, we understand why the Christian Knights of the Klan is growing today. The cause of the problem is not a few murderous beasts in human form who don filthy sheets and pillow cases and set out to kill. These cowardly carnivorous beasts in human form are dangerous and must be stopped. But they are an effect, not a cause. The cause of our problem lies with caucasoid people in high places who are creating a Scapegoat Mentality among this nation's caucasoid people. It's the powerful people—from the halls of Congress to the board rooms of the corporations—who are telling caucasoid people, for example, that if taxes are eating up their paychecks, it's not because of our bloated military budget, but because there are too many government programs that benefit Blacks; telling them that if young caucasoid people are unemployed, it's because Blacks are getting all the jobs; telling them that if there is crime in the streets, it's because Black people are creating it. What is at stake is the very soul of Amerika—and the future of every one of us, and of our children.

Dr. Jamil Cherovee

Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.

Cocaine In America

Part II



Last week I wrote about the rise of cocaine use in America and the new forms of this drug being used on the street. Today's article will deal primarily with addiction.

The addictive nature of cocaine is believed to be primarily a psychological dependency, rather than a true physical addiction. In fact, Van Dyke and Byck reported in the March 1982 Scientific American that regular cocaine users could not distinguish between inhaling the drug versus a placebo. In other words, the psychological high is a greater part of the drug than is the physical high in addicted individuals. Yet we still spend over 30 billion dollars annually in the U.S. alone for this drug.

While psychological dependency predominates and explains, in part, the high use of cocaine in lower socio-economic groups, the physical component is indeed real. As mentioned last week, cocaine is both a nerve blocker and a stimulant. These two combinations seem to counter depression momentarily, and recently antidepressants have been used to ween people off of cocaine.

The Athletic High: In the past decade, cocaine use in athletics has become a grave national concern. Are athletes more likely to use cocaine, or are they simply in the spot light?

There are a number of factors involved in cocaine use by professional athletes:

1) The physical high of cocaine acts in much the same way as the physical high of competition. The adrenal-mimicking component of the drug corresponds closely with the adrenal beta-endorphin pleasures of physical excitement. In other words, the cocaine high probably comes closer to the high of competition and victory than anything found outside of these activities. (The parallels to performing artists and other celebrities are similar.)

2) Athletes have been long acknowledged as part of a "meat market". In the late 70's all-American Pete Rose reported that, to his knowledge, most major leaguers had used stimulants to get them up for games at one time or another. Athletes are told, and last year one professional basketball player was ordered, to use "pain killing" drugs to perform

for the audience. The use of steroids has been a concern for over 30 years. And yet these men and women who are told to take legal drugs with known dangers are persecuted for experimenting with street drugs. It is hard for us who are not forced to use drugs to work to fully equate to this double standard.

3) While we often fantasize about the pay and pleasures of professional athletics, the reality of athletic competition is far from paradise. On the average, only one person out of every 4 high schools will make it into professional athletics. The top athlete from 3 schools won't make-the-grade and hundreds of others who dreamed about this future "failed" even earlier than "spring training". Fortunately most people can accept this failure, yet many have made no plans other than athletics and are emotionally depressed by their loss.

Even those who do make the cut and play for a professional team do not always find happiness. Career-ending injuries, mediocrity among the giants and belonging to cellar dwellers are but a few of the depressing realities that face today's athlete.

4) The Coach: I lettered in 4 varsity sports in college and in 2 sports in high school. I experienced coaches for whom I still hold the highest esteem, and others whose input and prejudice were as destructive as our society tolerates. I've seen kids make the "first string" more for their parents social status than for their ability. The understandable depression and negative self-worth of the more skilled "second string" athlete is obvious. In athletics the coach is the "will-of-god" and the slighted athlete usually has little or no recourse.

5) Robin Williams once said on the "Tonight Show" that cocaine addiction is God's way of telling you that you have too much money. While many athletes do have deeper pockets than most, even our poorest citizens can "afford" the habit. The income of the athlete keeps him/her from stealing the money but cannot be looked at as a cause of dependency.

Next week I'll conclude with some of the things that I feel can help individual and social problems with cocaine.

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