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THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1982

Student drug policy

The Hoke County Board of Education is considering a new anti-drug policy for the schools, and it sounds more effective and more constructive than the present policy.

The present policy has students caught with or using drugs on school property suspended by their principal who recommend expulsion for the remainder of the school year. This applies to first offenders as well as repeaters.

Only the county schools superintendent has the authority to expel, and he does if the findings substantiate the charge. The student has the right to appeal to the school board, which can either support the expulsion recommendation, limit the penalty to 10 days' suspension given by the principal, or reverse the principal's decision.

If suspended or expelled, the student has the opportunity to attend off-campus classes to keep up with his school work during the suspension or expulsion period.

The new policy being considered would add a compulsory drug education class and give first offenders only 10 days suspension.

Second offenders would be expelled and turned over to the law enforcement authorities for prosecution in court if the superintendent and/or board found the facts warranted those actions.

If convicted and given probation by a court, the student would be compelled to attend a drug-education class also, as a condition of probation. He also would have to attend the drug-education class which would be established by the new policy.

The school system's class would run for 10 hours total at the rate of an hour a day, which would cover the period of suspension. The court-ordered course runs for 15 hours, held on four days.

The off-campus class arrangement would be continued.

Dennis Brewster, Hoke County mental health unit manager and substance-abuse counselor, told the school board at its March 15 meeting that the program of drug education wouldn't solve the problem of student drug use; but the hope was the school drug-education course would save students who were just experimenting with drugs (when they were caught) from "a trip to a hospital" for treatment of overdosing, or to "Dorothea Dix (state mental hospital) for life."

The new policy with its provision for drug-education for offending students holds a promise of important progress, though not perfection, in getting the serious problem under control.

The board will act on the proposed policy at its June meeting.

--BL

Break for Soviets

President Reagan, with the "help" of his secretary of state, managed to give the Soviets an international propaganda tool.

The Soviets, President Leonid Brezhnev said last week, had halted the deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union.

The Soviets, he said, want to set a "good example."

This is the very thing many Americans had hoped one or another American president would do. But, on the contrary, Reagan has hollered for a buildup to meet the Soviet "threat."

With the Soviets coming up with its halt, they make themselves look like peace-seekers, and the American government look like a peace threat.

Later, Reagan dismissed the Soviet arms freeze as a propaganda ploy and said the U.S. will proceed with plans to deploy missiles in Europe next year.

It's obviously a propaganda ploy, it's going to work, and it's no excuse for continuing the American buildup.

Reagan might bone up on a historical principle of communism's goal. The principle has it using not just one method -- military force -- but economic, political, social and anything else that the Communists think will do the job best.

Reagan also goofed in Soviet-U.S. relations last week in saying he wishes Evangelist Billy Graham wouldn't go to Moscow and preach at the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Soviets invited him to do. Reagan is afraid that the Soviets will use Graham's preaching as a propaganda tool against the U.S.

Reagan shows in this fear a lack of faith in Graham's intelligence and experience and apparent ignorance of the sort of message Graham has been bringing to the millions who have heard him in the 30 years he has been preaching his worldwide Crusades.

Graham several years ago did preach in one of the Soviet bloc (Communist) Eastern Europe countries.

As far as we know, the Soviets didn't make a single convert out of it.

Furthermore, Reagan apparently doesn't know that much-lesser-known, relatively unknown American ministers have been in Russia holding services in private homes and elsewhere.

The Russians as far as anyone knows haven't been able to make a single stalk of propaganda hay out of them.

The Russians, however, could make some propaganda hay from Reagan's wish that Evangelist Graham would preach somewhere else -- anywhere but in Soviet states. For example, they could say: "Doesn't your Saviour say somewhere in your Bibles: preach the Word of God to all men?"

This, of course, would ban an accusation of hypocrisy.

Reagan, however, could reply that He didn't say a thing about preaching to Soviets.

But instead of trying to discourage Graham from preaching in the Soviet Union, Reagan ought to be encouraging him to preach in the Soviet Union and every other Soviet-dominated country that gives him the opportunity.

'Sorry, Old Timer — you struck it rich a little too late!'



People of Graham's stature and reputation could do the United States and its people a great deal more good in developing friendship with the Soviet-dominated people than the amount of harm in adverse propaganda that the Soviets could do with such visits.

Graham Crusades and similar religious activities could be effective as propaganda tools for the U.S. as they could be used for the same purpose by the Soviets.

This is a two-way street.

They also just happen to fit the spirit of Judaeo-Christianity of which the American system is the political expression.

--BL

Avoid oil crisis: plan

From The Christian Science Monitor

With the world now awash in an oil glut and falling gasoline prices it might be well to heed the words of former Energy Secretary James Schlesinger: "I suspect the energy crisis is over until we have our next energy crisis." Mr. Schlesinger's sense of irony - and timely warning - befits an ex-energy official who faced his own crisis of long lines at the gas pumps a few years back. The important point is that the current period of ample supplies - in large part stemming from a falloff in demand because of recession - not be allowed to lull Americans into complacency about the need for continued conservation and development of alternative energy sources.

Although a combination of high prices, new exploration, conservation, and recession has caused the US to now have the "lowest level" of dependence on oil imports in the past 10 years, according to current Energy Secretary James Edwards, it must be recognized that any number of political or economic factors could alter that situation very quickly. The industrial world remains highly vulnerable to the Persian Gulf area for its supplies. The question of a future embargo cannot be totally dismissed; nor can the ability of OPEC nations to make future supply cutbacks. OPEC nations will be meeting in Vienna March 19 to ratify a decision to cut production by more than one-million barrels a day.

Moreover, as the industrial nations slowly recover from recession in the months ahead demand will surely rise.

Much of the recent reduction in energy (and oil) usage has now been "built into" the economic system in, for example, the form of more fuel efficient cars and electrical appliances. But there is still much more that can and should be done to reduce the growth in demand even more. Private citizens must not be tempted to return to an energy "spree," what with lower prices. Washington, for its part, might well consider offering limited subsidies or loans to financially hardpressed firms that convert to coal. Some technical assistance and loans might also be made available to third world nations eager to develop their own oil resources to help spread production as widely as possible. The US should also consider plans to ensure that there will be a fair allocation of existing oil stocks in any future shortage. To that end Mr. Reagan would seem to be well served by signing into law the Standby Petroleum Allocation Act of 1982.

That measure was recently passed by wide congressional margins - 86-to-7 in the Senate, 246-to-144 in the House. The legislation provides the President authority to allocate oil supplies and control crude and refined product prices during a "severe petroleum supply shortage," and only if the President, in his discretion, decides free market allocation is not working. Yet, the administration is said to be considering vetoing the bill because it runs counter to the free market.

What now seems in order are clear steps - from continued conservation, to development of alternative energy sources, to standby allocation authority - to ensure that there need not be a new and unexpected "energy crisis" in the years ahead.

Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:

Because you get only one side, you sometimes get the impression that everybody in Russia is perfectly contented, that if you're a factory worker the hours and pay are great and if you're a farmer, plowing for the state is a joyful occupation. If you're a housewife, living in a one-room apartment with the bathroom down the hall is agreeable so long as your satellites are circling the globe on schedule.

Every once in a while however there's a crack in the propaganda. Just recently I read that drunkenness is a major problem in Russia and there's a shortage of doctors to take care of people who can't show up for work on Mondays.

Also, Russian officials have never been able to figure out why a peasant farmer can produce more on the acre he's allowed for his own use than on the 50 acres he works

for the state.

But the funniest report came out last week. The head of the Russian national circus was caught shaking down performers in the 20,000-member outfit. Police searched his apartment and found \$200,000 in cash and \$1.1 million in diamonds. He was driving a Mercedes and that probably caused his downfall.

Big cars are made for the use of top Communist officials. Russian citizens are supposed to ride bicycles.

Dictator Brezhnev, explaining to a puzzled citizen why he has eleven big automobiles and the average citizen a bicycle, can squelch such a questioner by saying "Why would anybody need eleven bicycles?" And the citizen will say, "Oh, I see. Of course."

If he knows what's good for him, Yours faithfully,
J.A.

It's a Small World

by Bill Lindau

Feller who is usually cheerful was looking depressed one morning.

"What's the matter?" a colleague asked.

"It's my wife," he said glumly. "She treats me like a dog."

"What makes you say that?" the other asked.

"The other night I came home late from a poker game. It broke up a lot later than I thought. She was waiting for me when I got home. And you know what that woman did?"

The sad man sighed and said: "She batted me across the nose with a rolled-up newspaper."

Since last Wednesday was St. Patrick's Day, here's one about an Irishman whose quick thinking saved him from the same kind of brute strength and awkwardness at the hands of his wife.

Paddy's wife had finally gotten fed up with getting him out of jail for fighting after he got drunk. He never did fight when he hadn't been drinking that fighting liquor. She also got tired of having to get up in the wee hours and fetching him from the home of a friend, who didn't have room for a sudden guest, especially, an inebriated one.

So she extracted a promise from Paddy: he would never drink again.

Paddy kept the promise, and the weeks went by, and Mrs. Paddy became a stranger to the town jail and to Paddy's friends' places.

But one night Mrs. Paddy was passing by a local pub when she happened to glance in, and there she saw Paddy at the bar with a glass in his hand.

Immediately, she stormed in, her face menacing with red fury.

Paddy, shocked, looked at her and explained quickly. "I just stopped in for a glass of water, darlin'," he cooed. Mrs. Paddy snatched the glass from his hand, sniffed it and sipped it.

"That's whiskey," she snarled. Paddy's eyes bugged out, his mouth opened, he looked upwards, then he looked at his wife, and in a tone filled with awe, he whispered: "Begorra! A miracle!"

While waiting to see someone in an office in Raeford the other day, I noticed a little sign on a bulletin board.

It bore a cartoon of Snoopy and Charlie Brown sitting on a street curb.

Under it were the words:

"Doing a good job in a place like this is like wetting your pants in a dark suit."

"It makes you feel warm. But nobody notices."

Seriously speaking...President Reagan was quoted in an interview as saying some chiseler used his food stamps to buy vodka.

That one must have been fed to him by one of the anti-food-stamp people.

It's highly unlikely, though nothing is impossible, that any liquor store, or general store selling liquor would accept food stamps even in partial payment. Liquor stores aren't licensed to accept food stamps, and the others would risk losing the right, and the profit therefrom, to accept food stamps for a year if they were caught

accepting food stamps to sell so much as half a pint of alcohol.

Yes, Virginia, there are people out there enforcing the rules governing the use of food stamps, though they get no nationwide publicity.

The same is true of the enforcers of rules governing taking payments for public assistance of all kinds, including unemployment.

In recent weeks, in Hoke County alone, District Court judgments were issued against people accepting unemployment and other public assistance payments they were not eligible to accept. They were given sentences suspended on condition they make restitution of the illegal payments to Social Services.

Periodically, before those recent weeks, convictions of such violations and the penalties for the violators have popped up in the Hoke court records.

And besides the pros on Social Services Department staffs there are neighbors who catch violations from time to time. For one example, one department got a call that a man was getting food stamps but his family was no bigger than the caller's and his job paid a lot better. The department investigated, found a violation, and the violator had to make restitution for the ineligible receipts.

Maybe some do get away with welfare chiseling, but the record shows it's risky to try. Probably not all have been or will be caught. But it's not for lack of Social Services trying.

And many are caught, and this may be a deterrent for others.

The amount of chiseling and abuse of welfare payments also has been exaggerated, as Marion Smith, director of the Randolph County Department of Social Services, found out.

Several years ago, wearied by charges of one or another county commissioners that people were using their welfare money to buy beer and liquor, Smith did a thorough investigation.

When he was finished, he reported at the next commissioners' meeting of the 1,500 Randolph families getting public assistance checks, only one person was found to have bought alcohol with welfare money -- a six-pack of beer.

And that violation brought a penalty.

Smith also had been hearing the regular comments that a lot of able-bodied people were living off welfare and not even looking for jobs.

Next time that remark was uttered, Smith turned to a commissioner and told him that he was glad he mentioned that, because he had a bright, educated young woman on welfare, she needed a job, but she'd been turned down everywhere she went.

Maybe the commissioner would hire her. Sure, the commissioner said.

She had just one difficulty, Smith added, caused by gland trouble. She weighed 300 pounds.

Well, the commissioner stammered, he'd be glad to give her a job. But he just didn't have anything open in his office right now, he said.

That's what they all tell her, Smith said.

The critics of the welfare system can find enough real (though correctable) defects in the system without indulging in misleading, generalized exaggerations.

Letter To The Editor

Editor, The News-Journal

I am writing this letter as an appeal to all motorists and especially truckers to help the North Carolina State Highway Patrol aid stranded motorists on our highways.

The well-publicized incident of a young woman stranded all night on I-40 outside Raleigh presents the problem. Now, I am in receipt of a letter from a woman in New Bern who was stranded for more than four hours on U.S. 70 the night of February 8.

She writes: "May I remind you that I sat in the same spot for over four and one-half hours on the side of a heavily traveled highway. I kept my flashing lights on for the entire time. Although many cars passed, no one would stop. Several times I turned on the headlights and stood in front of them so that the passing motorists could see that it was a S'1", 100-pound woman who needed help. Still no one stopped."

After the incident involving the young woman on I-40 the State Highway Patrol reinstated a 24-hour patrol policy with special emphasis on interstate highways in the state. The intention is to see to it that these limited access highways are monitored in the late night

and early morning hours.

There are, however, more than 75,000 miles of roadways in this state, and the Patrol is spread very thin in trying to monitor them on a 24-hour basis. There is no way to cover every mile.

If we are to come to the aid of every stranded motorist, which is the goal of the Patrol, we are going to need the help of all our citizens. If you see a motorist stranded along one of our highways, please go to the nearest telephone and call the local State Highway Patrol headquarters or local law enforcement agency about the motorist. If you have a C.B. radio in your vehicle it would be so easy for you to report a stranded vehicle to a base and ask for the report to be relayed to the Patrol.

When we were growing up in North Carolina, this was a state of good neighbors. Everyone helped a person in need. That's the way we were brought up. The story of the Good Samaritan in the Bible is most important.

We must not become a state of strangers in such a hurry that we can't even report a stranded motorist on our highways. The next time you see a stranded motorist, help.

Sincerely,
Heman R. Clark