

think the problems exist in their local high schools. They go on to say, earth to parents, it is spring, and it may be time for a chat.

I would suggest everybody needs to take a chat with a youngster today, and I commend your reading this Wall Street Journal editorial.

The text of the Wall Street Journal editorial is as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal]

REVIEW & OUTLOOK—THE DOPE ON SPRING

About this time last year, a forwarded email message was making the rounds of college campuses. "Don't forget," the message advised, "the appropriate greeting is "hi, how are you?" not "how high are you?""

This month, while grown-ups were busy preparing tax returns, a lot of their college-attending children were partaking in the annual springtime bacchanalian festivals either in warmer climes or in on-campus celebrations of some meaningful date in their school's history. On these occasions many of the students ingest a cornucopia of drugs that most of their parents (despite imagined babyboomer sophistication) have never heard of.

Nor does it seem they have much interest in knowing what's going on. Despite all the attention given to drug abuse, parents are apparently disinclined to believe that their kids are using drugs. In a study released last week by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 71% of teenagers said they "had friends who use" marijuana and almost half admitted they themselves had tried it. But only 21% of parents thought that their little angels might partake (admittedly even that must go down as a higher percentage than their own parents would have conceded).

In fact, this is a drug "culture" with frightening differences from the glory days of 25 or 30 years ago. Today even "soft" drugs like marijuana can be as much as 10 times more potent than the joints their parents toked. Because of crackdowns or smuggling, the neighborhood greenhouse business has flourished: New strains like "hydroponic," where the plants are grown without soil and "wet"—marijuana soaked in formaldehyde—have been increasing the drug's potency exponentially. Meanwhile, drug use among teenagers has doubled since 1990.

Other drugs, like methamphetamine, are also the product of basement alchemy, often involving youths producing it, which in turn introduces some of them to criminal enterprises. There are substantial profit margins in this new underworld for chemists who turn over-the-counter cold medicines into a particularly wicked concoction called "ice," "crank" or "speed." Costing \$5 to \$25 a dose, it offers a high similar to powder cocaine, which retails at upward of \$100 a gram, but it is much more accessible to a middle-schooler's allowance. And these laboratories are proliferating.

Something else that's new: The spread of black-market pharmaceuticals like Ritalin and Ephedrine, which have become a hot commodity in many suburban neighborhoods. Last November, a group of suburban middle-schoolers got hauled in by Virginia police when the principal caught a seventh grader selling his Ritalin prescription to his pals. Other favorites come right off the store shelves: Krylon gold paint for inhaling and whipped-cream cans for nitrous oxide.

Last April, a 16-year old in a Chicago suburb was caught with 37 grams of marijuana, some opium and paraphernalia stashed in his parents house. A 15-year-old set up shop selling pot, PCP, Extasy and Special K in an affluent District of Columbia suburb. These aren't just the kids from the wrong side of

the tracks. Ask any college student about the prevalence and diversity of the new chemical culture. You'll get an education.

For the '70s generation, famous for its hedonistic experimentalism, the statistics suggest a willful ignorance. Parents disbelieve, perhaps because they're afraid to find out the truth. Polls show that 82% believe drugs are a "serious problem nationally," but only 6% think the problem exists in their local high school.

The baby-boomers' self-indulgence has come home to roots, only this time there's no ideological crutch. What's becoming increasingly obvious is that Gen-X drug use involves teenagers who've rejected their parents' political ideals but adopted their libertinism. A 1995 study by the University of Michigan revealed that after a 13-year lull, teenage drug use had climbed three years in a row. Yet nearly one kid in three claimed that his or her parents have never discussed drugs with them. Only a quarter say it's a topic of frequent conversation.

Earth to parents: It's spring, and it might be time for a chat.

□ 1830

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

RANDOM DRUG TESTING OF HOUSE MEMBERS AND STAFF IS ILL-ADVISED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, the House is about to implement rule changes that will require random drug testing of all House Members and staff. Drug usage in this country, both legal and illegal, is a major problem and deserves serious attention. However, the proposal to test randomly individuals as a method to cut down on drug usage is ill-advised and should not be done.

The real issue here is not drugs but rather the issues of privacy, due process, probable cause and the fourth amendment. We are dealing with a constitutional issue of the utmost importance. It raises the question of whether or not we understand the overriding principle of the fourth amendment.

A broader but related question is whether or not it is the government's role to mold behavior, any more than it is the government's role to mold, regulate, tax and impede voluntary economic contractual arrangements.

No one advocates prior restraint to regulate journalistic expression, even though great harm has come over the century from the promotion of authoritarian ideas. Likewise, we do not advocate the regulation of political expression and religious beliefs, however bizarre and potentially harmful they may seem.

Yet we casually assume it is the role of government to regulate personal be-

havior to make one act more responsibly. A large number of us in this Chamber do not call for the regulation or banning of guns because someone might use a gun in an illegal fashion. We argue that it is the criminal that needs regulated and refuse to call for diminishing the freedom of law-abiding citizens because some individual might commit a crime with a gun.

Random drug testing is based on the same assumption made by anti-gun proponents. Unreasonable efforts at identifying the occasional and improbable drug user should not replace respect for our privacy. It is not worth it.

While some Members are more interested in regulating economic transactions in order to make a fairer society, there are others here who are more anxious to regulate personal behavior to make a good society. But both cling to the failed notion that governments, politicians and bureaucrats know what is best for everyone. If we casually allow our persons to be searched, why is it less important that our conversations, our papers and our telephones not be monitored as well? Vital information regarding drugs might be obtained in this manner as well. Especially we who champion the cause of limited government ought not be the promoters of the roving eye of Big Brother.

If we embark on this course to check randomly all congressional personnel for possible drug usage, it might be noted that the two most dangerous and destructive drugs in this country are alcohol and nicotine. To not include these in the efforts to do good is inconsistent, to say the least. Unfortunately, the administration is now pursuing an anti-tobacco policy that will be even less successful than the ill-fated Federal war on drugs.

I have one question for my colleagues: If we have so little respect for our own privacy, our own liberty and our own innocence, how can we be expected to protect the liberties, the privacy and the innocence of our constituents, which we have sworn an oath to do?

Those promoting these drug testing rules are well motivated, just as are those who promote economic welfare legislation. Members with good intentions attempting to solve social problems perversely use government power and inevitably hurt innocent people while rarely doing anything to prevent the anticipated destructive behavior of a few.

It is said that if one has nothing to hide, why object to testing? Because, quite simply, we have something to keep: our freedom, our privacy and the fourth amendment. The only answer to solving problems like this is to encourage purely voluntary drug testing, whereby each individual and each Member of the House makes the information available to those who are worried about issues like this.