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THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN SOLVING THE DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, it is an accepted fact that drug abuse in this country has reached epidemic proportions. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare estimates that there are at least 250,000 heroin addicts nationally; the numbers of amphetamine and barbiturate abusers are inestimable. It is more than evident that the personal physical damage is appalling, not to mention the social costs.

Paula D. Gordon, speaking at the Delaware drug educators' retreat on June 4, 1973, in Rehoboth, Del., forcefully discusses the problem, with a primary emphasis on the role educators must play. She emphasizes the need for understanding and guidance to disoriented youths caught in the web of drug abuse. I would add that the role of the family is a determining element which cannot be minimized—nor should it be. At one point, she states:

You as educators have much to add to the self worth of youth. Your own common-sense, initiative, understanding, and humanity can contribute immeasurably to the quality of the lives of our young people; consequently what you do has a most critical bearing on the future of the young, the future of society, and on the future of the nation as well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of Miss Gordon's remarks be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO ABOUT THE DRUG PROBLEM

It has often been contended that the drug abuse problem has gotten so bad that it is driving people to drink. Besides parents of adolescents and young adults, school administrators and educators would appear to be most likely candidates for such a fate. If this somewhat ironic situation does exist, there is at least one positive thing that can be said about it—if we are successful in making inroads into the drug problem, we will also be contributing to the solution of the alcoholism problem.

The question I would like to deal with today is what can be done about the drug problem—what particularly can schools do about the drug problem?

It is quite obvious that schools are currently faced with far more than their share of difficult problems. Even if there were no drug problem, there would still be numerous other difficult problems with which to contend, problems ranging from discipline and truancy to vandalism and other forms of delinquency; problems related to curricula—such as community concerns and pressures over sex education and other controversial content issues; to problems involving school financing, redistricting and busing to achieve racial balance. On top of all of these problems, schools are now having to grapple with the drug problem and its far reaching implications for the health and well being of the students involved, as well as that of the rest of the school population and society generally. Perhaps the most hopeful thing that can be said about the drug problem and all of the other most pressing social problems facing the schools—is that many of these problems are rooted in the same causes and if we are successful in solving the drug problem, we will be successful as well as solving many of the other most pressing problems plaguing schools and society today.

In my remarks today I will suggest positive steps that schools can take to help in solving the drug problem and hence to help in the amelioration of other pressing social problems.

Before getting into these specific recommendations, I would like to take just a few minutes to talk about how problems are solved, how things get done.

R.G.H. Siu, a contemporary American writer and an extremely sage individual who has shed much light on the problems involved in administering the affairs of society—has written in a book called "The Tao of Science" that the American way of dealing with problems is a "doing way." Extrapolating on the basis of Dr. Siu's observation, one can further generalize that just doing something does not always solve a problem or help to ameliorate it. In fact, when such action is undertaken thoughtlessly and without requisite understanding, it can have the effect of making things worse. It can have the effect of creating new problems and making the original problem even more difficult to solve.

I have a favorite story about problem solving which helps point out at least two of the major elements required in successfully solving any problem. It concerns an actual incident which occurred in a residential community in Oakland, California. One afternoon one of the men residents was sitting in the lounge reading a newspaper when he noticed that a lizard which has normally caged in a large terrarium in the corner of the room opposite him, had somehow escaped and was crawling up the outside of the cage.

Having a real aversion to lizards, he was not about to take any action himself. He did, however, walk over to the cage and stand there scratching his head, wondering what could be done to get the lizard back into the terrarium where it belonged. While he was standing there, several other male residents began to gather around and to discuss what could be done to remedy the situation. As this was going on, a young woman resident walked into the lounge and seeing that the lizard was out of the cage, walked over and said, "What's the lizard doing out of the cage?" reached up and grabbed the lizard, put it back in the cage and walked out of the room, leaving the men in a state of minor embarrassment and dismay.

Now, I do not relate this story out of any women's liberationist's motives—but rather to point out two major elements that are required in the solving of any problem—common sense and initiative. No problem, however small or however large—can be solved without these two most important ingredients.

Additional elements are also required in solving problems, particularly complex social problems and particularly problems as complicated as the drug problem. Perhaps the most important of these elements is understanding: understanding of the nature and implications of the problem—and understanding of what can be done about it—understanding why people are using drugs—particularly the young, understanding what this means in terms of their futures and the future of society, and understanding what steps can be taken which will have the effect of helping to solve the problem.

(Parenthetically I would add here that understanding must be translated into action if it is to contribute to the solution of the problem. If a person does understand what needs to be done, but acts out of political or other narrow or self serving motives, then little if any real headway can be made toward solving the problem. In fact, when people act out of an absence of understanding, the result can be to complicate the problem and render its solution more difficult.)

One of the basic prerequisites in any attempt to solve the drug problem is understanding of the underlying causes leading to drug use; the contributing factors and the reasons which underlie drug use. A theory of human needs developed by the late psychologist Abraham Maslow—can be used to shed light on the wide variety of causes underlying drug taking behavior. Maslow's theory, briefly stated, is simply that human beings have certain kinds of needs which include physiological and security needs—basic survival needs—social needs, ego needs, and self actualization needs—the need to fulfill one's

potential as a human being—of becoming a fully functioning and healthy personality.

In later writing, Maslow further described this state of ideal psychological and social health as being characterized by metamotivation, metamotivation being motivation which is rooted in a synthesis of concern for the welfare of others and the welfare of one's self.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory states that the lower level needs, beginning with physiological and security needs—food, shelter, etc.—must be met before higher level needs can come into play and that middle range needs must be met before self-actualization needs and metamotivation can come fully into play.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be used to shed light on the wide spectrum of causes, unmet needs, and unfulfilled aspirations reflected in the entire spectrum of human behavior. His theory can be especially useful in understanding the many varieties of drug taking behavior. It is important to bear in mind, however, that just because drug taking behavior may reflect unmet needs and unfulfilled aspirations similar to those reflected in other personal and social behavior, that the effects, the implications, and the complications of drug taking behavior are often far more wide-ranging and of a far more serious nature than those arising as a consequence of other behavior. This is owing to the fact that drug use can affect mental functioning, mental, emotional and physical health, motivation, spiritual and characterological growth and development as well as social health generally, the health of the school, the community, and the nation.

While drug taking behavior may reflect unmet survival needs, unmet social or ego needs or unfulfilled higher level aspirations of a self actualizing character, there is one thing that bears on all varieties of drug taking behavior—that is the intrinsic humanity of each person. In some individuals, this element may be only barely distinguishable.

John Cage—whom some of you may know as a composer of experimental music—is also a writer. His book "Silence" contains numerous anecdotes, much of which share certain similarities with Zen koans. One of these anecdotes bears on our present concerns. It is about Arnold Schönberg, the famed composer, when he was teaching a class in advanced musical composition at the University of California at Los Angeles. Schönberg had asked the class to come up with a solution to a problem in composition which he had given them. One solution was offered. He asked the class for another solution, and then another and another. After a number of solutions had been provided, he charged the class to tell him what principle underlay all of those solutions.

Like the problem which Schönberg posed, the drug problem has many responses, many answers, but all of these responses share a common principle. With respect to the drug problem that principle relates to the intrinsic humanity of those engaged in drug taking behavior and the need to help redirect the growth and development of those individuals along lines which are conducive to healthy human growth and development, conducive to psychological and social health, to the cultivation and enhancement of their intrinsic humanity.

In solving the drug problem as well as our other most pressing social problems, it is imperative that our efforts be directed toward the humanization of all our societal institutions from the family to the school, from the world of work to government. Only when our efforts to deal with our problems share this common focus and direction, and we hope to reverse current unhealthy and destructive trends.

Of all social institutions, however, it is the school which offers our greatest immediate hope in attempts to solve the drug problem. Because of the ever increasing fragmentation of family life, because of the difficulties involved in trying to help the family to quickly become a positive force in the development of healthy individuals, the school offers the best immediate hope for meaningful change.

Not only are the young all equally obliged to attend school, their attendance is on a continuing basis. Teachers, administrators, pupil personnel generally stand in a far better position than do many parents to provide the kind of responsive and humanizing influence that is needed if the drug problem is to yield to solution. The generation gap and the difficulties parents and children have in communicating with one another make widespread reorientation of family life highly unlikely over the short run.

These problems which so impede family harmony can be resolved, but their resolution will require a vast reductional effort and a commitment to a return to fundamental human values.

The school is more flexible than the home as at least some elements of the school experience can be easily changed to begin to make schools more human, more responsive to human needs and aspirations. Many adults working within schools share a deep concern for the welfare and health development of the young. Their understanding of the young is apt to be deeper than that of most parents because of their continuing exposure and involvement with youth. Because they do not have the same degree of continuing responsibility for youth that parents have, they can maintain far more detached and less interpersonally threatening relationships with the youth with whom they come in contact.

Because unusual opportunities for change exist within schools, and because the problem of drug use among youth poses such a serious threat to youth and to society, every effort needs to be made at the school level to solve the drug problem. In order to accomplish this objective, a whole hearted effort needs to be launched to bring about a basic humanization of education throughout the nation. The kind of reorientation required will be hastened greatly when there is a clarification of the long range goals of education.

Maslow wrote about the need for such long range goals for education in a little known book called "Eupsychian Management." His view was that as soon as we decided that the goal of education in our American democracy should be psychological and social health—healthy human and social development—that the ways and means of achieving that goal would fall into place. Because no such decision has yet been made, the overall status of American education has become less and less tolerable.

A top ranking official of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in the late 1960's observed at that time that U.S. education was fifty years out of step with the times. I would add to this official's observations that American education has also become increasingly out of touch with basic human and social values, needs, problems, concerns, and goals.

Popular contemporary songs bring this same message home in various ways. There is the opening line of Paul Simon's new recording, "Kodachrome" which slightly abridged is "When I think back to all . . . I learned in high school, it's a wonder I can think at all." A line from "Son of My Father", a rock hit of 1972, contains the words, "surrounded and confounded by statistics-facts." The opening line of a Moody Blues hit of a while back deals with more existential concerns, "Why do I never get an answer when I am knocking at the door?"

Perhaps, this is best summed up in a line from another current hit that goes, "The things that pass for knowledge I can't understand." This line always reminds me of an incident which occurred a few years ago when I was a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. I had been talking with a friend who had to leave for class and got up to leave, saying, "I'm off to philosophy to find out how life isn't."

Education must begin to focus on how life is and how life can be. It must help to cultivate human understanding. It must encompass a concern for basic social, ethical, spiritual, and existential matters. It must begin to deal in a meaningful way with questions of meaning and purpose. And perhaps, most importantly, it must provide opportunities for students, for the young—to become meaningfully and responsibly involved in life.

The following kinds of approaches can be adopted in attempting to achieve these broader goals:

Classroom instruction can be made more active and less passive in its orientation—more human and responsive and less cold and anonymous.

Education can be made more relevant to the realities of today's world—and to the world of work and adult responsibilities. This can be done by providing opportunities at every grade level—to learn by doing; to become acquainted with the real world; to meet, talk, and work with adults and with youth and young adults of all ages; to engage in meaningful activities and enterprise; and to thereby gain a sense of what it means to be a fully functioning human being capable of making a contribution to society and capable of being of some service to others, of relating to others in a meaningful way, and of assuming a responsible role in life. Recent efforts on the part of the U.S. Office of Education to promote "Education for Parenthood" and "Career Education" both would seem to be quite in tune with these kinds of objectives.

Values and ideals must be emphasized and not in a mechanical way and not in a sterile, value neutral vacuum, devoid of love, humor, human feeling, and purpose. Youth need to be helped to cultivate healthy and positive values and ideals; they need to be helped to grow into whole, psychologically healthy human beings.

Current practices in grading and in assessing cognitive knowledge and skills need to be radically changed. As presently constituted, such practices appear to encourage and perpetuate narrow self centeredness and outthroat competitive instincts—attributes which are the opposite of those we most need to survive as a civilization. These attributes which we most need would include a concern for others, and a capacity and inclination to collaborate with others to achieve the common social good. Grading and assessment practices also need to be changed because of their present tendency to psychologically entrap students in a failure syndrome, a syndrome which is particularly pertinent to drug taking behavior. Such entrapment manifests in several ways. A young person may become involved in drug taking because he is failing to do well in school or he may begin to fall in his school work because he has become involved in drug use.

Either way, he can become so deeply overwhelmed and demoralized by the fact of failure that any effort to get out of that situation seems useless and impossible. By adopting any of a number of approaches to grading and evaluation suggested by William Glasser in his "Schools Without Failure," it would be possible to short circuit or circumvent such regressive tendencies and influences and to avoid perpetuation of a failure syndrome. One option to current approaches to grading is the Pass/No Pass approach. An A,B,C, No Merit approach can also be adopted where no grade is recorded on an individual's record if he gets less than a C in a course. (It is worth noting here the case of a progressive Southern California high school where a Pass/No Pass approach to grading was adopted. The school administration found out shortly after the switchover was made, that extensive inservice training was needed to reorient the teaching staff. It seems that grades had been used up until that time in coercive ways—primarily to keep discipline, a func-

tion which is only indirectly related to any primary educational goals.) Other approaches which seek to individualize the assessment process need also to be considered. If one of the purposes of education is to help each individual progress to the fullest extent of his capabilities, then we must stop putting senseless roadblocks in his way. There is absolutely no point or purpose in using the same criteria to measure and compare the achievement of two persons with vastly different intellectual capabilities, experiential backgrounds, talents, etc. The important thing is that each person be provided an opportunity to realize his or her potential while becoming a healthy, fully functioning personality.

A response must be made to one of the primary complaints voiced by many youth today: a lack of any place to go or anything to do. This of course reflects a failure of the family, the school, and society, to help the individual to develop his or her own inner resources so that one is able to make good use of time, one is able to engage in recreational and social activities, to relax, to find fulfillment in educational, cultural, artistic and service oriented pursuits. The school can here again be used to fulfill a remedial as well as a developmental function by providing a ready-made facility which can be used for after school hours activities—weekday afternoons and evenings and for portions of the weekend. Supervision would need to be provided in the form of adequately trained personnel who could in the form of adequately trained personnel who could be professionals, paraprofessionals, volunteers or paid—or a mixture of all of these. Activities could be as wide ranging as the interests and capabilities of students and supervisory personnel permitted. When it is not possible to use school facilities in this way, community facilities and churches and the like can be considered. The merit of using a school facility, however, lies in the fact that all who go there as students have already established some sort of tie with the school—whereas a community facility is apt to draw only the more intrepid members of certain segments of the student community.

In all that I have said thus far about the general need for a reorientation of the education experience, it would seem that the single most important thing is to help nurture in youth a concern for the welfare of others and to provide them every opportunity possible to express such concern and thereby develop a sense of personal worth and a feel for what it means to be meaningfully and purposefully involved in life.

The adoption or adaptation of the kinds of approaches I have just enumerated would most certainly lead to a reduction in drug taking behavior because they would be addressing many of the unmet needs and unfulfilled aspiration which gave rise to drug taking behavior in the first place. In order to deal with the symptoms arising from drug taking behavior and in order to intervene in an effective manner after drug use or experimentation has begun, schools also need to adopt other approaches in addition to those already mentioned. These include the following innovations or reforms:

Non-punitive policies and approaches need to be adopted in schools to supplant purely legalistic actions such as expulsion and suspension. Alternatives to such action need to be provided which focus most importantly on helping the individual to break out of the cycle of drug taking behavior or to cease experimenting with drugs and other harmful substances. In lieu of prosecution, in lieu of being remanded to the juvenile authority, in lieu of suspension or expulsion, the young person can be remanded to counseling, to other forms of care or guidance that may be appropriate, and to special programs and activities designed to help redirect his or her energies and attentions along more constructive lines. Parents can also be asked or even required to take part in such activities, counseling, or programs—as a condition

of waiving more typical legalistic approaches. Examples of approaches which seek to divert juvenile users (and in some cases dealers) from the justice system are found in the Clark County High School District, Las Vegas, Nevada; in a probation department sponsored program in San Diego County, California; and in the youth services division of the justice system in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, and several adjacent suburban communities which have adopted a counseling oriented approach to dealing with juvenile offenders.

It is essential that special counselling be set up within the school to help in prevention efforts and to provide for earliest possible intervention in drug taking behavior. Those providing the counselling will require in most instances specialized training—whether they are professionals or paraprofessionals. They need to have basic counselling skills and to understand the symptoms and motivation involved with drug taking. They must possess maturity and be psychologically healthy and not themselves be current users or promoters of drug taking behavior. They need to be able to establish rapport with those whom they counsel. They need to be a friend and a confidante, a person who is truly concerned for the welfare and the future of the individual being counselled and befriended. The counselor must also be able and inclined to motivate those whom he or she counsels along beneficial and constructive lines. It is particularly important that such a counselor provides a positive model by his or her own behavior. It is important that he or she not use or implicitly or explicitly condone the so called "responsible" or "sensible" use of marijuana, hashish, pills, or other drugs and substances used for non medical purposes.

The use of counselors in school settings who do condone or implicitly encourage such behavior have the obvious effect of contributing to the continuance and spread of drug taking behavior. Community support for efforts which do have a permissive orientation can expect to be short lived if the community is at all informed concerning what is happening in the school.

The emphasis of counselling as well as of educational and guidance efforts needs to be geared to the needs and level of understanding of those being counselled, educated, or provided guidance. While in many cases, it is important to spend some time in helping the young person understand the implications and the effects of drug use, it is typically far more important that attention be focused on personal motivation, on helping the individual gain a better understanding of him or herself, of others, and of life generally. The past emphasis on a primarily or solely cognitive or informational approach has not only proved lacking but in some cases has been shown to be counterproductive, actually contributing to drug taking behavior, rather than leading to its decrease. Swisher and others have drawn such a conclusion from their studies. They write, "An approach (to drug education and prevention) that relies on information alone may not be sufficient to reduce or prevent the use of drugs, and in fact, may have the opposite effect." (P. 340.) A study conducted in the 1980's in Southern California to evaluate the effectiveness of health educational approaches to help stop smoking showed that smokers were far more apt to cease smoking when a noncognitive approach rather than a cognitive approach was taken. Health educators had far greater success when they focused on helping the smoker understand his or her motives for use rather than when they focused on informing smokers concerning the effects of smoking. Drug educational efforts have tended to have a cognitive orientation until recent times. Consequently they have not proven very successful with adults or with youth. The informational approach is generally predicated on the nearly wholly erroneous assumption that drug taking behavior is based upon a rational decision making

process. This is not only far from true in the case of most of the adult population, it is even less true in the younger generation where an even wider range of non-rational factors tend to contribute to drug taking behavior. These factors relate to what is often a far more existential and anxiety producing mixture of unmet needs, social pressures, and unfulfilled aspirations than is found in most adults.

Because of the increasingly criminogenic and pathological character of the drug culture and of drug taking, provision for various forms of confidentiality and immunity from prosecution will be required to make sure that users are able to receive the counseling, guidance, care, etc. that they need. Such policies are needed to protect those who provide the services as well as those who partake of them. Policies providing for pre- or post parental permission (before or after the fact of use has been admitted, recognized, or established) provide one way of handling such matters.

There is a need to focus on attitudes and values and on increasing self worth and motivation, and on meaningful pursuits. There is a need for helping an individual gain a better sense of him or herself, and to find satisfaction in being of service to others, of being a contributing member of society. One of the most noteworthy studies on this subject is a preliminary report on Operation Future, a drug control project of Kings-Tulare County (Visalia, California). In this project, data has been gathered which shows that "a definite relationship exists between the abuse of drugs and the lack of values on the part of today's young people." As a result of these findings, Operation Future has been experimenting with a variety of approaches designed to help enhance personal value concepts. They have demonstrated that drug abuse can be ameliorated by adopting approaches which focus on the enhancement of personal value concepts. An increasing number of schools have adopted such a focus in their efforts to ameliorate the drug problem. The Coronado School District in San Diego County in California, a pioneer in this area, has been particularly successful in this regard. Schools in North Dakota have also been engaged in implementing a self enhancement approach to education which serves to address many of the unmet needs and unfulfilled aspirations which give rise to drug taking behavior.

In bringing these remarks to a close, I would like to tell you briefly about a recently launched nationwide movement whose purpose is to contribute to the solution of the drug problem by promoting adoption or adaptation of many of the same alternatives, reforms, approaches and policies I have touched on here. This would be the ALFY effort which grew out of two conferences held under the auspices of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs of the U.S. Department of Justice in 1972 and 1973. I would commend to your attention the publications resulting from those conferences,

particularly the booklet entitled "Alternative Programs—A Grapevine Survey" and the "Proceedings" from the first and second Conferences on Alternatives to Drugs. Much material is contained in these publications concerning school-based, community-based, and criminal justice system-based approaches and policies—all of which are humanistic in orientation and all of which are designed to be responsive to human needs and to take positive steps to prevent drug use and to help deal with the problems reflected in and arising from drug taking behavior.

I would like to quote from comments made at the last conference held at Airle House in Airle, Virginia in early January of 1973. These comments providing a fitting note upon which to conclude. The man speaking has had a long history of involvement with the law as well as with drugs. In fact he related the story of his first involvement with the law at the first Alternatives conference. It seems he had pushed a flower pot off a third story terrace when he was only three years old. It narrowly missed two policemen who were standing on the sidewalk below—who immediately rushed upstairs to find out who was responsible. After his long history of involvement with the law, this person has merged one of the most "together" individuals I have ever had the opportunity to know—I share with you his insights:

I really go for the idea where people (begin) to learn what it's really like to feel comfortable on a gut level and not practice what we call, what I like to call, the "cloak of respectability".

I dare say right here before all of you that that's seemingly our biggest problem: that we're taught from the cradle to the grave to wear a cloak of respectability rather than to develop true respectability; and the young people today just are not going for that. They see the cloak does not work. With all the power we have and all the influence, we're thirty-second in terms of health delivery in the world today. We're kind of backwards, and the young people recognize that, so they're not listening to us; they're looking for their own thing.

It's just unfortunate many of them do not have the guidance and the direction and the road models to get caught up in the right thing, but when you really get right down to it, it's a matter of learning what the most valuable thing that any human being possesses is. And that is his own self-worth and how he carries himself; how he feels about himself; what he's doing in terms of adding to those feelings. It either takes that self-worth away or adds to it.

You as educators have much to add to the self worth of youth. Your own common sense, initiative, understanding and humanity can contribute immeasurably to the quality of the lives of our young people; consequently what you do has a most critical bearing on the future of the young, the future of society, and on the future of the nation as well.