

DARE: 'Brave New World' comes to your local police department

by Leo F. Scanlon

In most police jurisdictions in the United States, uniformed police officers are intervening in grade school and junior high school classrooms, supposedly in the name of anti-drug education. The program is called Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), but it is not really an "anti-drug" program at all; it is psychotherapy administered by an unlicensed practitioner, who happens to wear a uniform and carry a gun. The aim of the New Age psychotherapy sessions is to break the child's ties to the moral outlook of the parents and church, and to persuade the young child that he or she is qualified to decide whether or not to use mind-altering drugs.

DARE is an intensive psycho-profiling program run by specially trained and selected local police officers, who conduct group therapy sessions with children in all grades in the public school system. The essence of the scheme is described by the words "Resistance Education" in the program's acronym. Under the rubric of "increasing the self-esteem" of the child, in order to build "resistance to peer pressure," the officers conduct a weekly session with each grade of students, during which the children are induced, through invasive and coercive techniques, to discuss personal and family problems in the group setting. The alleged purpose of this therapy is to encourage the child to value opinions which he perceives to be his own, above those he has assimilated from other sources, parents included. DARE officer Rick Martin explains: "It's not so much a program where we say, 'This is marijuana, this is cocaine, don't do it.' . . . It deals with ways to feel good about themselves."

A study titled "Sensation Seeking as a Potential Mediating Variable for School-Based Prevention Interventions: A Two-Year Followup of DARE," published in the *Journal of Health Communication* in 1991, concluded that the DARE program so confuses its victims that no significant difference between students subjected to DARE and a control group could be found, except one: *Significantly fewer non-DARE than DARE children had tried marijuana within a year of taking the course.*

The psychotherapy techniques used in this and other curriculum reforms now prevalent in the schools are seen by their practitioners as an end in themselves, and the negative result of such programs with respect to their stated goals is of no consequence to the program managers. The "therapy" develops information which is of interest to the vast social

services bureaucracy which extends beyond the classrooms, and the information developed in the course of the role playing and group dynamics sessions which shape the DARE discussions, is noted and catalogued by the officer, who develops dossiers on the families of the students, ostensibly to profile potential cases of abuse or neglect. The information developed by the DARE officer is transmitted to specific state agencies which maintain reports on "suspected" child abuse, and other family problems.

The DARE officers make use of techniques developed by Carl Rogers, who pioneered the "non-directional" psychotherapeutic techniques (generically known as "group therapy") which are now being imported into all manner of educational curricula. Rogers's work was popularized by his student J.T. Hart, in a book called *New Directions in Client Centered Therapy*. The book was published in 1970, and served as a how-to manual for spreading group dynamics therapy into every conceivable social setting. This was the substance of the New Age movement, which spawned the plethora of pagan cults which have been "mainstreamed" into American culture. The personality theories of Abraham Maslow, who rejected behaviorism and psychoanalysis in favor of an approach he called "humanistic," were incorporated by Rogers and the New Age apostles.

Maslow himself spent his last years repudiating the feel-good ethic of Rogers and the New Age movement, and his student W.R. Coulson continues this effort to this day. The use of group therapy techniques aimed at encouraging "self-actualization" (this is called "affective education" when applied in the classroom) was dangerous with adults, Maslow concluded, and would produce outright psychological disorders if applied to children, since the exaggerated effort to create an unearned sense of self-esteem destroys the child's ability to identify evil within himself. Coulson warns that these programs will have a "time bomb" effect on the next generation.

History of DARE

DARE began in 1983, as a project of the Los Angeles Police Department in conjunction with the Los Angeles Unified School District. Dr. Harry Handler, superintendent, and Dr. Ruth Rich, a health education specialist, reviewed programs under development in the behavioral training lab cir-

cuit, and concocted DARE, which concentrated on “techniques for resisting peer pressure, on self-management skills (decision making, values clarification, and problem solving), and on alternatives to drug use” (*Program Brief, Invitation to Project Dare*, from the Bureau of Justice Assistance).

Despite the fact that no official study could demonstrate any positive value to the radical program, DARE quickly became the premier anti-drug educational curriculum in the country, something which could not have happened without the efforts of Daryl Gates, former chief of the Los Angeles Police Department—which, at the time, was the most sophisticated and one of the most respected police departments in the country. Chief Gates lent his wholehearted support to DARE, thus validating it among law enforcement officials who otherwise would tend to shy away from such New Age schemes.

While it may be debatable whether Gates understood the full nature of the DARE program, it is clear from his public utterances in support of the program that he has been subjected to a “light rinse” in the New Age laundromat. Gates might be caricatured as a product of “assertiveness training on steroids,” but his flawed views are representative of the outlook of the millions of American parents who approvingly watch their children get brainwashed in school every day, by DARE and similar programs.

DARE is the result of the fact that the United States did not launch a real War on Drugs. It was the substance of the “Just Say No” campaign of Nancy Reagan in the 1980s, which marked the end of the Reagan administration’s efforts to forge a serious War on Drugs on the international level. Instead, it turned anti-drug politics into a domestic circus. As this magazine has documented, the Anti-Defamation League, in conjunction with drug runners operating in the orbit of Lt. Col. Oliver North, took advantage of this shift to launch an effort to bankrupt and silence those calling for effective action against the financial centers of drug money laundering, and eventually succeeded in jailing Lyndon LaRouche and several associates. Government prosecutors in cahoots with the ADL made it clear in court that they were retaliating against the book *Dope, Inc.*, commissioned by LaRouche. That politically motivated prosecution, along with the launching of the Contra guns and drugs supply operation, signalled the abandonment of even any consideration of the kind of policy option which LaRouche had put forward to the administration, for an effective international War on Drugs.

According to the above-mentioned brief of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, in 1983-84, ten officers taught the DARE curriculum to more than 8,000 students in 50 Los Angeles elementary schools; by 1986, the program encompassed all schools in the city. Gates invited other jurisdictions to send officers to Los Angeles for 80 hours of intensive DARE training, drawing officers from 33 states representing 398 agencies, at which point the BJA agreed to fund the establish-

ment of multiple DARE regional training centers, which became operational in 1988. These centers are governed by a board which includes two representatives of law enforcement and one educator from the BJA. Also in 1986, the BJA awarded federal grants to numerous jurisdictions to participate in training, and the Department of Defense agreed to incorporate the program in all of its anti-drug programs in schools for military dependents. The program then went international, with New Zealand first, and England and Australia following soon thereafter.

According to the BJA, “The most important component of the training is the modeling of each lesson by experienced DARE officers (or ‘mentors’). Each trainee then prepares and teaches one lesson to fellow trainees, who play the role of fifth or sixth graders, and who subsequently evaluate the officer’s performance. Mentors advise and support trainees throughout the training, by helping them prepare for presentations and offering suggestions for improvement.”

What this actually means is explained by articles published in the *Empire-Tribune* in Stephenville, Texas, which reported that DARE training involved officers being subjected to a regimen which begins with the issuance of a teddy bear to each participant, who must sleep with his teddy, “protect” his teddy, tell his secrets to his teddy, etc. (This is the thematic basis for Justice Department-sponsored programs such as “Bears Against Drugs” and other similar government programs.) The candidates are then subjected to therapeutic sessions where they “learn to cry,” “re-experience their childhood,” and “face the emotions inside.” They participate in psychological techniques designed to “break down barriers built from being policemen.” In “communications training,” officers “grope around, blindfolded, able to communicate only by tapping each others’ palms. . . . Or . . . writing poems. . . . Or guarding their teddy bear from harm.” These exercises are “intended to change the officers’ most basic ideas about police work.”

The attack on traditional law enforcement outlooks is blatant enough that, on average, 10% of the candidates (a self-selected, pre-screened elite group of officers), become morally repulsed with the training and drop out. “They don’t have the right attitude,” an administrator says. Religious officers report that the program is aggressively amoral and New Age.

The graduates of the program are relieved of normal police duties, and in fact are forbidden to make arrests in the community, since that would break the “trust” they must establish with the target group of students. These officers report on their work directly through their “mentors” in the DARE network, which exists as a parallel, supra-police agency.

‘It was as if we’d driven them to drink’

DARE draws its techniques from a variety of psychotherapeutic devices which were evaluated in a study conducted

Psychiatrist shows how reading levels dropped

The "New Age" approach to education, which the DARE program typifies, is having a disastrous impact on how children learn—or fail to learn—the Three R's. In his book *On Learning to Read* (Alfred Knopf, 1982), psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim advances various hypotheses on the decline of reading in the United States, focussing on the role of grade-school primers as they have *devolved* over the years, and on the destructiveness of their boring repetition on a child's desire to learn to read. He cites a 1971 study by Harris and Sipay which documented a shocking decline in the content of the most widely used primers. (This was before the full onset of "affective education," and the situation today is much worse.)

"Harris and Sipay report that the first readers published in the 1920s contained on the average 645 different words. By the 1930s, this number had dropped to about 450 words. In the 1940s and 1950s, vocabulary had become further reduced to about 350 words. Analyzing seven basic readers series published between 1960 and 1963, they found that 'the total preprimer vocabulary ranged from a low of 54 to a high of 83 words; primer vocabularies from 113 to 173 words.' "

The readers became perforce repetitive and dull. Bettelheim notes that even the least verbal group of first graders has command of about 2,000 words, which cuts through the argument that children from culturally deprived homes need such simple readers. On the contrary, as he shows, the manifest decline in reading skills, which was used to justify continuing reductions in vocabulary, is actually due to children's increasing boredom with the material presented.

This negative assessment has been repeated in studies conducted by a variety of academic behavioral psychologists, the latest done in Kentucky in 1991. These studies all show that DARE and its progeny are capable of changing the "attitudes" of students toward drugs, but not their behavior. DARE officers "test" the children at the end of the course, and the children politely repeat what the nice policeman has been telling them to say for the last 17 weeks—and then go out and use drugs anyway, often at higher rates than if they had never met the DARE officer at all. Advocates of the DARE program cannot produce a single study, except these useless questionnaires filled out by the students themselves, which shows that a child subjected to the curriculum is less likely to use drugs than one who is not. Since the bulk of the claims on behalf of DARE come from the officers who administer it, it is useful to note that the *DARE Implementation Manual* instructs the officers that "the DARE officer's classroom performance is graded by (among other things) how well he rephrases students' responses as needed."

Judy Mcemore, an anti-DARE activist in Alabama, notes that one of the most damaging indictments of DARE comes from "Nata Preis of USC's Project SMART . . . [who] said that in its first year her institution's experimental alcohol education program . . . stressed decision-making and self-esteem for children. . . . On conducting the scheduled followup research, however, *she and her colleagues found significantly more members of the experimental group than the control group imbibed. . . . It was as if we'd driven them to drink!*" In fact, they had.

Project SMART was designed to compare two parallel systems of "resistance training," one focussing on social forces (parental pressures, etc.) and the other focussing on affective elements. The issue being addressed was the apparent superiority of the methods which appealed to social pressure and the example of authority to induce a change in attitude toward smoking, alcohol, and drugs. As will be seen, this "social forces" program itself is no prize, and the "affective" curriculum is even worse. SMART was supposed to find ways to make the affective approach, which does not have the "defect" of appealing to parental or adult models of behavior, as effective as the social curriculum. The improvements in the affective methodology which resulted from this work led to the DARE program.

The course outline for the Social Curriculum includes the following topic headings:

- Promoting group identification
- The nature of peer pressure
- Role playing
- Role playing resisting peer pressure to use drugs
- Positive and negative parental influences
- Saying "no" (practice)
- Public commitment
- Videotaping of students' commitment to say "no" to pressure to use drugs.

By comparison, the Affective Curriculum differentiates

for the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), called "Project SMART." Project SMART was reviewed by a group of psychiatrists from the University of Southern California in a paper published in the *Journal of Preventive Medicine* in 1988, and that review states flatly that the techniques utilized in the DARE curriculum had a *negative* effect on the students who were exposed to them. The summary concludes that "by the final post-test, *classrooms that had received the affective program had significantly more drug use than controls.*" The SMART study is the basis for a RAND Corp. program using similar techniques, and underlies a family of "anti-drug" programs which go by the name ALERT, as well.

itself with lessons devoted to:

- Alternative solutions to problems
- Deep breathing
- Self-monitoring
- Goal setting, Part I
- Goal setting essentials
- Drug use interference in personal goals
- Deep breathing (practice)
- Goal setting, Part II
- Setting a personal goal
- Deep breathing (practice)
- Building self-esteem
- Assertiveness, Part I
- Making assertive statements
- Muscle tension—relaxation
- Assertiveness, Part II
- Muscle tension—relaxation
- Public commitment
- Videotaping of students' commitment to engage in alternatives instead of using drugs.

In sum, the “affective” approach modelled by Project SMART is, if anything, even more insidious than the more conservative “social curriculum” approach, though both are outright brainwashing schemes of Orwellian dimensions. They attempt to destroy and then reform the value system of the child, in order to encourage the child to “make his own decision” about the use of drugs. Reliance on parental authority or adherence to religious strictures is viewed as a *negative* factor to be overcome. Not surprisingly, successful administration of the program produces adolescents who are (falsely) confident about their judgment in such matters, and frequently “make their own decision” to use drugs anyway.

A Benthamite judicial concept

Both curricula reflect the axiomatic view of American criminologists and social scientists, that individual morality is merely the result of a rational submission to social pressure by an individual who is otherwise driven by asocial hedonistic impulses. This Benthamite concept has dominated the field of criminal justice throughout American history, and was most recently popularized by criminologists Wilson and Herrnstein of Harvard. This view counterposes itself to the idea that each individual, even the criminal, is created in the living image of God, and is therefore capable of rehabilitation (or, redemption) if given the proper circumstances and spiritual guidance.

It is no secret that the majority of the Supreme Court is actively partisan in support of the Benthamite thesis. In a speech delivered to a crime summit last year, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor called for a “new Great Awakening” as the only way to stem criminality. The nineteenth-century movement she wishes to revive combined prohibitionism with a variety of social reform movements, which were based on the idea that membership in various “clubs” (YMCA's, masonic associations, and so on) would create social pressure to deter criminality.

The prohibitionist movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not merely “anti-alcohol,” but, like the DARE propaganda of today, was part of a broader approach to social policy. The prohibitionists insisted that if the poor would simply stop drinking, for example, they would no longer be poor, and prohibitionist propaganda was explicit in its rejection of the need for reform of the monetary and

economic policies of the nation. Prohibitionist rhetoric is directly comparable to the “family values” rhetoric of today, in that it asserts that failure (poverty) is primarily a result of the refusal of the individual to conform to or “join” specific social institutions. Both theories invert reality in order to avoid facing the fact that the existence of *endemic* poverty, drug abuse, and other social ills, is evidence of some failure in the monetary and social and governmental policies of the society as a whole.

If you examine the two counterposed curricula studied in Project SMART from this standpoint, it will be clear that these are not mutually exclusive programs, since they share basic assumptions. The Affective Curriculum's “self-esteem” is the cognate for “peer pressure” in the Social Curriculum, and so on. DARE proponents attempt to distinguish between the supposedly opposite approaches in order to duck the repeated findings that affective education always increases the use of drugs among the target group, since it more effectively dislodges the student from any norms of adult society. Even a study published in *Health Education Research* (Vol. 6, No. 3), which evaluated DARE as if it were a distinct form of “social skills” program—which it isn't—was unable to come up with any more favorable conclusion than that “DARE demonstrated no effect on adolescents' use of alcohol, cigarettes or inhalants, or on their future intentions to use these substances.”

The “affective education” referred to in the studies is code talk for behavior modification programs which are endemic throughout the school system, and industry as well. In general, the term means that the moral or “value” base of the target is being manipulated through a variety of devices, including role playing, group dynamics, physical exercises, and confrontation sessions. SMART and its derivatives and offshoots, were developed as “anti-smoking” campaigns, and have been used to justify the enormous funding poured into the anti-tobacco lobby over the past 10-15 years. Virtually all of the government's propaganda in this realm is shaped by the social-psychology research done by SMART and the labs which created it, and just as DARE does not reduce drug use, there are no statistics to show that there has been a reduction in the number of people who smoke cigarettes, even if there have been slight shifts in the demographics of smokers.

This is the model of the “new prohibitionism” which is shifting its focus to alcohol, especially wine.

The most important point is that these programs utilize techniques of social manipulation, not reason, to achieve their goal. The social manipulators admit that they are targeting “gateway” examples of what they call bad behavior by adults—parents in particular—and thus are opening the door to further attacks on the authority of the family.

The government bureaucracy at all levels participates in this policy of ersatz prohibitionism, producing the propaganda slogans which appear throughout DARE literature. For

example, the "style manual" of the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention instructs that "'Alcohol and other drugs' is the suggested expression when writing about drugs, including alcohol. The use of this expression emphasizes the too-often-overlooked fact that *alcohol is a drug*." Later, the manual reiterates the point that "'alcohol and other drug use' or 'abuse' is the preferred expression. Avoid using 'substance abuse' or 'substance use' because these terms are very broad and many people believe that these terms do not include alcohol." The child who accepts this formulation as authoritative has implicitly accepted the idea that his parents (if they smoke or drink wine) are "drug users." At that point, the more serious "mind games" begin.

What the DARE officers do

The main focus of the activity of the DARE officer is the 17-week course he or she administers to each of the classes in the schools he or she is responsible for. The Arizona Regional Training Center hands out a brochure to DARE officers which explains: "What You Might Expect of Fifth/Sixth Grade Students." The brochure reveals some very important elements of the mind set cultivated among the uniformed, armed psychoanalysts this program deploys against American schoolchildren:

"Fifth and sixth grade students are at a fascinating age. Many changes are taking place in their bodies, both emotionally and physically.

"You will observe a vast difference among the children. Some will be physically developed to a greater degree than others. . . .

"For the most part, the girls will be developmentally ahead of the boys. You will observe some very interesting behavior because of this phenomenon!

"You will inevitably find a few children who will want to try you. But generally, you will find the children to be controllable. Many at this age are still quite anxious to please adults. . . .

"Fifth and sixth grade students are still *infatuated with the police officer*. They will be most impressed with your uniform and all the accoutrements. Police officers dominate much of their television viewing time. . . .

"One of the reasons that DARE employs a uniformed police officer for curriculum delivery is that *we capitalize on the children's fascination with the officer*. The officer has instant credibility with these youngsters.

"You can certainly expect that many of these children are starved for attention. They are also starved for positive role models in their lives. In that setting *we have the potential for the development of strong relationships*. The DARE officer must be aware that *many of these children will seek to 'adopt' the officer as a father*. This can be a sensitive situation and must be handled delicately. . . .

"*You can expect that most of the children will be anxious to win your approval*. . . .

"These children will *regularly fail to observe the rule that we don't mention a family member or friend's name in class*. . . . *This is one of the rules most often forgotten*" (all emphasis added).

The last point is perhaps the most revealing. A DARE instructor at the Huntsville, Alabama training center was overheard explaining, "These kids will tell you everything; they'll tell you things that Mommy and Daddy would not want you to know." And that is one of the most important points of the entire DARE program. All the information elicited by the officers during the course of the group therapy sessions is logged and catalogued, and is available only to the DARE officer and those he or she reports to. One piece of DARE literature explains that in one exercise, students are asked to list, neutrally, various types of "feelings," and "the students are then asked to describe the times when they experienced one of those emotions. . . . The DARE officer introduces the idea that everyone has good and bad feelings by asking students a series of questions about what makes them happy, angry, scared, or sad. Students are called on to act out each of these emotions" (*Implementing Project Dare*, p. 49).

The ostensible reason for recording the musings of children is to encourage them to talk about "such problems as abuse, neglect, alcoholic parents, or relatives who use drugs." According to the *DARE Program Brief*, "Officers are trained to report and refer these cases to the appropriate school administration and state agency."

There are two points which need to be addressed with regard to this, admittedly sensitive, business.

First, as recent exposés in Maryland, Missouri, and elsewhere have shown, the government bureaucracies which have anointed themselves the saviors of "abused children" are constructing lists of parents who have been labeled "abusive"—even though in many cases, this label is pinned on the parents by impressionable children, or even the children of neighbors, who gossip to a school psychiatrist, a social worker, or some other official. (Keep in mind that the FBI is famous for suppressing evidence of the truly *organized* abuse, i.e., Satanism.)

The label "abuse," once applied, sits in a state file, and, as increasing numbers of unfortunate parents have learned, it can crop up to haunt them many months or years later, since these computerized lists are swapped freely among social workers, school officials, and police—everyone except the parents. The parents have *no right* to know that they have been so labelled, and have very little ability to fight the stigma which the secret label creates. For those who entertain the notion that such government practices are an illegal violation of individual privacy, note that the Education Commission of the States publishes a manual for bureaucrats which explains how to engage in "information sharing" without violating confidentiality laws.

Second, even if such lists could be presumed accurate,

Public scrutiny makes DARE trainers 'mad'

Alabama anti-DARE activist Judy Mclemore and a friend secured permission to attend a training session for DARE officers, and soon discovered that the officer subjected to this training has a very fragile sense of identity, easily threatened. Sergeant Osmer, who had spoken to Mclemore before the training session, told her that "anyone who didn't like the DARE program was his 'enemy' and if anyone messed with the DARE program 'it will make me mad.' "

Mclemore and her colleague requested to see a copy of the DARE training manual being studied by the officers (which, according to federal law, should be available to every citizen), and quickly found that they had poked into a hornet's nest. First, an officer was assigned to sit with the two observers, but this officer left after becoming uncomfortable with the arrangement.

Mclemore reports: "At this point, Captain Randy Amos came over and sat down behind us and stayed for the remainder of that session. At break-time, he came up and said that he wanted to talk to me. I could tell that he was upset but still had no idea what had occurred to cause him as well as the others to be so agitated. . . .

"He began by saying that the DARE Board had met

that morning and voted on whether to allow us to attend the training or not, and had decided to allow us to attend. But, he stated, 'you have been disruptive during the entire day.' By this time, many of the officers had gathered around us. I searched my mind for any disturbance we may have inadvertently caused but came up blank. So I asked him, 'how did we disrupt the meeting?' He replied, 'because you are resented.' More confused than ever, I then asked him exactly why were we resented. The Captain explained that all the men were aware of a letter that I had written to Governor Guy Hunt and therefore resented our presence at the seminar. . . .

"The officers seemed totally convinced that we were the enemy and by this time, we were surrounded at every turn by a DARE officer. They were making statements and throwing questions much faster than we could possibly answer. (It occurred to me at this time what an interrogation might be like.)"

She turned on the tape recorder she had brought to the seminar while this confrontation occurred. One officer reached over and turned it off, and later, another stole the tape. "To say the least, I was revolted. I recalled how only a few hours earlier I had seen a statement in the DARE workbook that read, 'Stealing a cassette is an example of a high-risk low-gain behavior.' And my mind immediately went back to the humiliating treatment we had just endured from the DARE officers." The police later admitted that they had, indeed, stolen her cassette; but they did not return or replace it.—*Leo Scanlon*

the broader social question is: Should such problems be addressed by government agencies, police agencies, in the first place? While one is naturally sympathetic to the plight of those who are truly victimized, there is something chilling about the image of a uniformed representative of the state police agencies passing out candy and teddy bears to children who are then induced to complain to the state about their family circumstances.

Behind the concern about "nipping abuse in the bud" there lurks a more arrogant and ominous attitude, reflected in a DARE manual handed out to officers instructing in the middle school grades:

"Many child development experts believe adolescence is stormy because *adults are ambivalent* about how grown-up they want youths this age to be. . . . *adults often expect more than adolescents are capable of giving* . . . the simple ideas and truths that *adults* may have presented earlier no longer work for adolescents. . . . adolescents want *explanations and real answers*."

The manual goes on to lead the officer into the real meat of the DARE program, the exploitation of adolescent conflict

by an adult who wishes to alienate the child from the influence of parental religious or moral values. While it is of course true that adolescence is a natural time for questioning one's parents' authority, it is quite another matter when a third party, a policeman, intervenes to *steer* that process in such a way that family ties are further weakened, telling a 12-year-old that he is now "an adult," the peer of his parents:

"Adolescents are beginning to recognize that everything is not strictly *good or bad, right or wrong*, but that there are *shades of gray to moral problem solving and decision making*. As a result, they are influenced less by the power of individuals who are bigger, older, or in authority, and more by *their own ability to make moral decisions* . . . the best way to present information is not through threats, statistics or *lectures about morality*. . . ."

The officer is taught to encourage the child to act on his or her own "independent process of judgment." It is no wonder that the effect of such a New Age schema is to increase the use of drugs—after all, the 12-year-old is no longer interested in the attitudes of the parents. As the DARE officer is instructed to explain to the sixth graders, they are "no

longer little boys and girls. *We're adults now.* We'll be talking on an adult level" (emphasis added).

The cult of the DARE officer

As the series in the *Empire-Tribune* newspaper illustrates, DARE officers are themselves the victims of dangerous psychotherapeutic practices. The destruction of the officer's identity as law enforcement professional is essential to creating the new identity as a therapist. Of course, the therapist moniker does not come with a medical license, and the officer does not give up his uniform, his gun, or his badge. In fact, our newly minted "therapist" is now conducting free-lance mind bending under the direction of his DARE mentors. This identity is perfectly suited to the mentality of the individual who sees himself as "above the law" and who believes that his special status as a psychological manipulator entitles him to powers and authorities which are actually extralegal.

Foremost among those extralegal powers is the right to keep secret records of the conversations he has with children. According to a *DARE Program Brief*, when students tell officers about "such problems as abuse, neglect, alcoholic parents, or relatives who use drugs . . . officers are trained to report and refer these cases to the appropriate school administration and state agency." As one observer of the DARE program says, "I guarantee you the DARE officer knows what you think of your neighbors, what kind of jokes you tell, what kind of books you read, and plenty of other things."

Mommy and Daddy often get a little worried about some of the things they find in junior's DARE workbook, so the *DARE Implementation Manual* suggests that after the children have completed 6-8 weeks of the program, the DARE officer hold a parent meeting to allay "suspicions" and assure the parents "that they are there to serve as role models, not to collect undercover information."

What is this concept, "role model," all about? Why should a policeman be the role model, rather than the parents? Of course, if you have abandoned your children to MTV, the policeman looks like a positive alternative. Unfortunately, DARE just makes a bad situation worse.

The DARE officers are no longer in the business of enforcing the law. They are in the process of becoming members of a *cult*, and betray the paranoid and secretive behavior common to all secret societies. The very words used in the DARE manual cited above emphasize that children under the effect of the program will eventually forget why they initially became attracted to the authority figure, and will "worship" this figure "like a hero."

This last point raises one of the more serious problems represented by the popularity of programs such as DARE. The destruction of the image of the heroic individual is a conscious policy of the American cultural elite of this generation. The soldiers, statesmen, and scientists who built the country have been denigrated and their struggles and accom-

plishments ignored, while the entertainment media have cultivated the violent, eroticized, existential anti-hero as the only image allowed to be represented in the culture. As the spread of "political correctness" on college campuses shows, this generation is increasingly susceptible to new and insidious forms of totalitarianism.

An organization of police officers who are cultivating themselves as "heroes," is a particularly dangerous and unhealthy influence on the children of a nation facing this internal threat.

DARE fronts for drug legalization

The official actions of DARE officers show that they are opposed to parental efforts to teach children to obey the law of the land (except when they "feel good" doing so). Parents in Alabama introduced a measure, House Bill No. 302, which contained the following paragraphs, dealing with anti-drug education programs, mandating that they include:

"2) Information conveying to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful and is punishable by fines and imprisonment"; and "4) Conduct that is illegal under state or federal law, including but not limited to, illegal use or distribution of controlled substances, under-age alcohol use or distribution, sexual intercourse imposed by means of force, or sexual actions which are otherwise illegal, shall not be encouraged or proposed to public school children in such a manner as to indicate that they have a legitimate right to decide or choose."

Sgt. Charles Thompson, president of the Alabama DARE Officers Association, Winston County Sheriff's Department, wrote to all county sheriffs in the state, demanding that they *lobby against* against these sound and simple admonitions:

"This letter is to inform you about the above referenced bills that are currently being proposed. . . . These bills, if passed as is, would return *all* Drug Abuse Prevention Programs to those that rained *scare tactics* upon youth in the late sixties and seventies. We can all attest to the fact that these programs at their very best were minimally effective, they did not work then—they won't work now. . . ."

"These Two Sections, as referenced, would effectively remove *decision making skills* and *critical thinking* as prevention techniques from *all* currently practiced curriculum. These Sections would eliminate your local School System's right to choose the Drug Education and Prevention Programs that they are now free to choose."

There is nothing secret about DARE, its contents, its origins, or its purpose. Normally, the parent is given the opportunity to have a child "opt out" of the program, although unfortunately very few do. Those parents who are properly agonized over their children's propitiation of their peers, and are hoping that a police officer can cure that personality defect, should first look in the mirror and examine the peer the child should emulate. Tom Sawyer summed it up: "Anyone who takes a DARE will suck eggs."