

## **EDITORIAL**

# Don't Knock That Swede

Most everyone is familiar with that advertisement a few years ago of an obviously-fit sixty-five-year-old Swede jogging along while we decadent North Americans were made to feel guilty about our life style. We were made abundantly aware that the Swede, at 65, was in better physical condition than many of us who might be in our forties.

There is no doubt that many retailers would rub their hands in anticipation if a product was pounced on after an advertising campaign the way physical fitness was eaten up after this "sixty-five-year-old Swede" jogged his way across our television screens.

Evidence of the very successful campaign is everywhere. In the morning while I am still shaving, the joggers are already at it, thudding their way down the sidewalk and around the block. As I glance out my office window about mid-morning, I can usually see the Tactical Troop leave for a two or three mile jog along the Rideau River, while at noon, as I munch on raw carrots, lettuce wedges and no salt, I can glance out the window to see sweating bodies lying on the lawn while they try to gulp some oxygen into their starving lungs.

When I drive into my neighborhood after work, there they are again, but this time many of them are adorned in some remarkably fashionable track suits. But it's in the evening when the streets come alive. The young, the old, the overweight, the underweight, men, women, people in training for another sport such as hockey, soccer, football, etc., some who don't own a track suit and would rather run under cover of darkness, are all out huffing and puffing in every direction. It's as if some megalomaniacal religion has lifted them above the affairs of mortal men. And incredibly, some of them actually believe it.

One of the problems with all this jogging, or running if you prefer, is in the attitude many joggers have towards those who don't. Have you ever noticed how inferior you are made to feel if you don't admit to being one of them. It doesn't seem to matter that you might be into some other form of physical exercise; if you aren't a jogger you aren't "with it". Listen to a couple of them converse, for instance, about their experiences while jogging, (by experiences I mean physical, spiritual, psychological or mental) and then walk up and join the conversation by saying that no, you don't jog, but you walk around the block every day for your physical well-being. Or tell them that you work out with weights and can repeat 150 lbs. ten times on a bench press. You will probably feel like you are being doused with a bucket of cold water.

But take heart, the results are positive, no matter what form of exercise you pursue. Despite the risk of being put to sleep by some bore who extols the virtues of jogging, or perhaps it would be better stated by using the general term "participation", the campaign has had its desired effect. A report published recently shows that the incidents of cardio-vascular disease have decreased in this decadent North America, while in purist Europe they have increased!

So don't be hard on that Swede, he has done his job well. Besides, maybe they will run (there's that word again) an advertising campaign in Europe, featuring a sixty-five-year-old Canadian. Ed.