

Red-tape almost causes death

V.G. refuses girl with O.D.

comment
by Paul LeDoux
"Acid doesn't sell like it used to. Kids are into downs and speed now."

That's five years later...now. Remember how the late sixties saw everyone worried about their teenage kids getting messed up on pot? Remember people fighting apathy and red tape trying to help those kids?

Drug Crisis and Helpline are two organizations that grew out of the pot paranoia. They have been fighting, calculating, responding to crisis situations like human beings — because no one else will; not the institutions and not respectable parents.

Five years of fighting — that's a long time. When it's five years later and things are no better, the time is too long.

Here's a story; it happened last week. It's 11:15 and a Helpline volunteer gets a call from Spryfield. On the other end of the line is a twelve year old girl, very frightened and very confused. She has just pulled an unconscious girl into her

basement. The girl had been on the street, is frothing at the mouth a bit and is out cold. Help.

The Helpline person makes two calls: one to Drug Crisis and another for a pick-up car to bring help.

Two Drug Crisis people start a very fast drive out to Spryfield. They stop at a fire station. "Wake up, we need a resusitator, get it ready, get a cop car and send the equipment to this address; we're going there now."

Speed, break the law, roar out the highway. The house. Dogs snarling, barking. In the basement on the dirty floor lies a mattress and a young girl (between 12 and 16). Sort of like a broken doll.

No needle marks, no sign of glue, it's a pill thing, acid or barbs; check the eyes, they respond to the light, pupils aren't dilated. Probably barbs, don't know how many or when but she doesn't need a resusitator, she needs to get to Emergency — fast.

Police arrive and the people tell them to take her to the V.G., she's got a bad overdose. The cops want to help, but know the V.G. won't take her. Got to try anyway. It's the only hospital with any real experience in O.D. cases.

There is background sound with this action. It comes from the parents of the twelve year old who made the phone call. It comes in a monotone. "Is she dead? If you've gotten us in trouble you're really going to get it. Look at that cop car, the flashing red light; what are the neighbours going to think? Don't feel, don't get involved, involved, involved."

The girl may die if they don't get to the hospital in time. Not a heavy weight as they carry the kid to the car. Sirens, lights, speed, swerving, missing an accident by a hair; got to get to the hospital fast.

The V.G. — Drug Crisis person runs inside. "Got an O.D., probably barbs. How old is she? We don't know who she is or how old, about 14 I guess.

We don't know how much of what is in her. She's dying."

"This girl is too young; the rules say we can't take her unless she is 15. Sorry."

Three minutes later she is at the Killam Children's Hospital. They don't have much experience with O.D.'s, not like the V.G. where the overworked staff got two more that same night. Those kids were old enough.

Street freak at the Children's. He's seen both sides of the O.D. He helps the doctor. Scouring the streets, someone is found who knows the girl. She's put in

intensive care. She makes it.

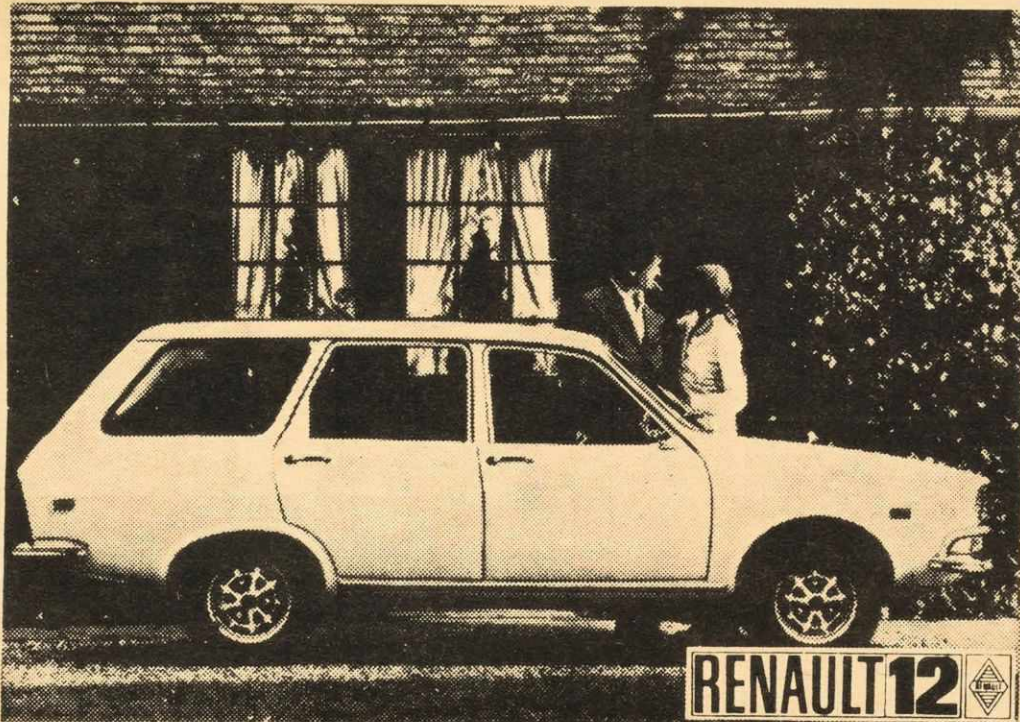
She could have died in the three minutes it takes to go from the V.G. to the Children's. But she didn't. So let's forget the callous parents, who would have left her in the road, let's forget the red tape that kept her out of the hospital best equipped to help her, let's forget the strung out kids, let's forget that sometimes they need professional help — fast. Let's forget it all, until some kid dies in the back seat of a cop car, because they can't get into Emergency.

**Boycott
Moirs
Products**

STUDENTS
Thank You For Your Patronage
"Good Luck" on Your Finals
**office
overload**

BUY NOW AT PRE-INCREASE PRICES!

Renault says "comfort is our thing. make it yours" and Renault delivers! The Renaults are the all-time comfort champions among the compacts and give you maintenance economy that the others are still attempting to equal.



THE RENAULT 12 STATION-WAGON:
The large (43 1/2 inches wide by 30 inches high) rear door of the Renault 12 Station Wagon gives access to a large flat floor strong enough to carry up to half a ton of merchandise. An easy to operate lever enables you to flip the back seat and extend the luggage area to 5 1/2 feet long.

**TEST DRIVE ONE TODAY AT
RENAULT MARITIMES**

6417 Lady Hammond Rd. — 455-5491
2173 Barrington St. — 455-0519

AROUND HALIFAX

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

Good Friday — no classes.

Atlantic Symphony and Atlantic Choir, "Requiem" — Verdi, Cohn Auditorium, 8:30 p.m.

Salvation Army — Barrington St., "Ben Hur", 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

Halifax Media Festival, Scotia Square Lower Mall, all day.

India Students' Association, Dinner and Dance, McInnes Room, 8 p.m.

MONDAY, APRIL 3

Dick Gregory speaks, McInnes Room, 12:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Dalhousie Film Society, "La Grande Illusion", McInnes Room, 7 and 9 p.m.

compliments of:
M.K. O'BRIEN PHARMACY
6199 Coburg Rd.