

"Widen laws to curb drug epidemic"

Says Canadian Psychiatric Association president in hard-line draft report

By GATEWAY STAFF

A personal statement by the president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association on the non-medical use of hallucinogens will probably cause widespread dissension in the profession.

A paper prepared by Dr. Keith Yonge, head of the department of psychiatry at U of A, rejects the assumption that marijuana is less harmful than alcohol and refers to the use of psychotropic drugs (those capable of modifying mental activity) in Canada as an epidemic.

It suggests drugs such as marijuana and LSD are causing permanent personality damage and describes habitual users as persons who have reverted to a primitive culture.

In addition, present laws against "loitering" should be extended to include the "neglect of educational and occupational opportunities, and persistent and unwarranted idleness" as an offense, says the pres-

ident.

Dr. Yonge also recommends present punitive measures against illicit drug users be made more "appropriate"—such as instituting a system of work colonies to replace imprisonment within penitentiaries.

The CPA president accepted an invitation to the association to submit a brief to the federal government's commission of inquiry into the non-medical use of drugs.

His recommendations appear in what he called a draft of a preliminary brief. He wrote it shortly before leaving for Brazil to attend a world psychiatric conference and circulated it to certain members of the association for their reaction.

Thursday, Mrs. Mabel Ferguson, an administrative assistant to Dr. Yonge, said those who read it either agreed or had "thrown it out the window."

And in Toronto, Dr. Alwyn Stokes, president-elect of the CPA, said "it would be unfair to the asso-

ciation, at this point, to seek to make public the reactions that members of the association have had to the paper."

He did refer to it cautiously as "a paper that comes down on the side of discipline."

"It cannot in any way be considered the statement by the association. It can only be considered a personal statement by Dr. Yonge, representing his thinking."

He said a committee to formulate a consensus within the profession that will lead to a presentation to the government commission has been set up since the paper's distribution.

While he cites no studies or statistics in the brief, Dr. Yonge claims that users of psychotropic drugs show definite patterns of deliberate idleness, neglect and non-self-support.

He says users regress "to the immature, the primitive" evidenced in a "reversion to the crude or prim-

itive in speech, in sexual expression and in taste for music forms (however much these may be rationalized as emancipation from socio-cultural oppression)."

Dr. Yonge states the effect of the pleasant subjective feelings induced by psychotropic drugs are of the same order as the pathology of serious mental illness: "namely in distorting perceptual and thinking processes and in diverting awareness from reality, impairing the individual's capacity to deal with the realities of life."

"It should be recognized," he says, "that the excessive privileges of 20th century society—its parental, school and state attitudes—has probably contributed considerably to these pathological social trends. To be remedial, this permissiveness needs to be balanced by manifest and unequivocal firmness, decisiveness and limit-setting."

The complete text of the report appears on page five.

Beware! Young and Old—People in All Walks of Life!



Marihuana Cigarette

This  may be handed you

by the friendly stranger. It contains the Killer Drug "Marihuana"—a powerful narcotic in which lurks **Murder! Insanity! Death!**



WARNING!

Dope peddlers are shrewd! They may put some of this drug in the  or in the  or in the tobacco cigarette.

BEWARE! — While Dr. Yonge's report may seem "hard-line" to many, here is a poster looked upon favorably by the American government. "This crude poster is a typical example of the kind of propaganda device officially welcomed and encouraged by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics as part of (to quote the Bureau) 'an educational campaign describing the drug, its identification, and evil effects.' The epithet 'Killer Drug' is entirely in keeping with the Bureau's mendacious description of marihuana as a lethal weed." — "The Marihuana Papers"