

Monroe County and the War On Drug Abuse

BY BARBARA MOYNEHAN

"I don't think people really understand the meaning of the word arrest," Franke Dovidio of the Irondequoit police criminal investigative unit explained.

"Arrest has a lot more meaning to it than people realize. It means the art of stopping a problem," he continued. "So, when someone is arrested in the act of a narcotic crime it is saving them, in any opinion. We do, regardless of what one reads about the police image, save people by applying the law."

Franke Dovidio and John Locke are general assignment police officers, "but narcotic crimes take up 90% of our time," Dovidio said.

"We see pot, acid, hallucinogens and occasionally heroin. Recently we arrested a heroin addict, but he was not from Irondequoit. He was just in town stealing to support his \$100 a day heroin habit. Addicts are arrested for robbery, burglary, every type of crime. It all leads to one thing, narcotics are behind the crime increase in the nation.

"I might add that in the last couple of months in Irondequoit, there has been a decrease in the illegal trafficking in drugs. It is down about 60%." The reason Dovidio gave for this is "the number of arrests effected here, and if we can keep it decreasing we will be very happy."

He stated that the no-knock permit is a valuable tool; "without it you may as well forget drug arrests."

"Recently Jack and I arrested a 33-year-old garage mechanic, which just goes to show you it is not just the jet set, it's everyone," Dovidio said.

"Drugs have been a problem for a long time and no area in the county is exempt, and anyone who thinks they are has his head in the sand," he continued.

"We've been on this since 1966. We talk to PTAs, school administrators and faculties, Rotary, Kiwanis, senior citizen groups, and we gave a curriculum for drug education to

an east side school. As of last September public schools are mandated to give narcotic instruction."

Locke said, "Everyone is interested and we maintain that education is the best deterrent."

Concerning Governor Rockefeller's attempt to relax the penalty for marijuana first offenders, Dovidio explained: "Anyone who talks about legalization of marijuana and is in favor of it doesn't know anything about the problem of dangerous drugs in our country. For example, we find that 90% of the people addicted to heroin over the past five years started on marijuana." He admitted, "Not everyone goes on, of course. We realize this and it is a fact, however I feel that the key to our problem today is marijuana."

Explaining arrest procedure, Dovidio said,

"Most of the arrests we make are for possession in the sixth degree which is for possessing a minute amount of marijuana, one cigarette, for example. After the arrest is made the subject is brought in to the station, booked and immediately arraigned on this charge. The judge remands him to county jail and sets bail. Possession in the sixth degree is a petty crime so the charge is handled in justice court, the town of Irondequoit's court of special sessions."

The maximum penalty is \$1,000 fine or one year in the county penitentiary or both. But is it rare that anyone is punished to the full extent of the law, Dovidio and Locke agreed.

Arrests made in the fifth to first degree for possession of amounts ranging from 1/8 of an ounce to anything over a pound of marijuana are felonies. "In such cases," Locke described, "the subject is presented to the grand jury. If he is indicted, his case is handled by county court."

"In view of the problem today across the nation, relaxing of laws is ridiculous," Dovidio continued. He sees "marijuana as the key, just the beginning; and I don't believe in relaxing the law when we have a high crime



Above, Senior Investigator Franke Dovidio with an assortment of confiscated pipes. Below, Investigator John Locke with \$300 worth of seized marijuana.



rate. If you relax the law it will just delay straightening the matter out."

"Drugs come into Rochester from as far away as Pakistan and Vietnam," Dovidio explained. "We work closely with the U.S. Customs and the postal authorities and many arrests are made of people in transit — airlines, buses, and cars.

Dovidio and Locke had very strong thoughts concerning advice to parents.

Locke stressed the importance of education. "First parents must educate themselves to what the drug scene is so they can communicate with their kids. If a parent suspects his child of using drugs there are counseling agencies and we counsel too. Arrest is not all we do. But parents educating themselves and then communicating with their kids provide the best deterrent we have to keep kids away from drugs."

Dovidio made four suggestions. "First, parents must not rationalize their children's behavior, and the law. Second, they must keep a close eye on their young ones; know where they are, who they are with and what they are doing. Third, parents must keep a close eye on any foreign matter found around the house and, fourth, they should not be afraid to call law enforcement agencies to discuss the matter. We don't just go off and make arrests. We try to help the situation before kids get involved in arrests."

"We've had a lot of response from parents," Dovidio reported, "we try to help them understand their kids, and help their kids understand them."

Tips For The Identification of Drug Abusers

Drug Used	Physical Symptoms	Look For	Dangers
Glue Sniffing	Violence, drunk appearance, dreamy or blank expression	Tubes of glue, glue smears, large paper bags, or handkerchiefs	Lung, brain/liver damage, death through suffocation or choking, anemia.
Heroin, Morphine, Codeine	Stupor, drowsiness, needle marks on body, watery eyes, loss of appetite, blood stain on shirt sleeve, running nose	Needle or hypodermic syringe, cotton, tourniquet-string, rope, belt, burnt bottle caps or spoons, glassine envelopes	Death from overdose, addiction, liver and other infections due to unsterile needles
Cough Medicine containing Codeine and Opium	Drunk appearance, lack of coordination, confusion, excessive itching	Empty bottle of cough medicine	Addiction
Marijuana ("Pot", "Grass")	Sleepiness, wandering mind, enlarged pupils, lack of co-ordination, craving for sweets, increased appetite	Strong odor of burnt leaves, small seeds in pocket lining, cigarette paper, discolored fingers	Inducement to take stronger narcotics. Psychological dependence. Possible physical damage.
Hallucinogens: (LSD, DMT)	Severe hallucinations, feelings of detachment, incoherent speech, cold hands & feet, vomiting, laughing & crying	Cube sugar with discoloration in center, strong body odor, small tube of liquid	Suicidal tendencies, unpredictable behavior, chronic exposure causes brain damage
Stimulants: Amphetamines ("Pep Pills", "Ups")	Aggressive behavior, giggling, silliness, rapid speech, confused thinking, no appetite, extreme fatigue, dry mouth, shakiness, insomnia	Pills or capsules of varying colors, chain smoking	Death from overdose, hallucinations, psychosis
Sedatives Barbiturates ("Goof Balls", "Downs")	Drowsiness, stupor, dullness, slurred speech, drunk appearance, vomiting	Pills or capsules of varying colors	Death or unconsciousness from overdose, addiction, convulsions in withdrawal