

EDITORIAL

October 25, 1984 VILLAGE ADVERTISER

Alcohol's Loosening Grip

EDITORIAL FROM:
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
Friday, September 23, 1984

On the surface, the news about alcohol use in the United States is that Oklahoma has become the 50th state to permit alcoholic beverages to be sold by the drink.

But at a deeper level the national current is flowing the other way. The nation is becoming increasingly aware of the needless problems that alcohol use can create on highways, in homes, and in the workplace. Americans are decreasing their per capita use of alcoholic beverages, and alcohol abuse is under attack from several directions.

For the fifth consecutive year Americans' per capita consumption of hard liquor is down. Beer consumption is declining again this year, as it was the year before last, after having increased slightly last year.

Americans are on the warpath against drunken driving. Citizen organizations are demanding effective national, state, and local laws and vigorous enforcement to combat the problem; they are getting action. To diminish the problem of drunken driving among the young, several states have raised their minimum drinking age to 21; more are expected to follow suit.

After-work "happy hours," when bars sell liquor at cut-rate prices, are rightly under attack. Four states—Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, and Delaware—are considering banning them statewide. Several communities have orbidden them, and others are considering doing so.

For its part the alcoholic-beverage industry is fighting back, trying to hold on to the large market it now has. One new approach attempts to take advantage of the fitness vogue and appeal to the young: mixing fruit juices with small amounts of alcoholic beverage. Alcohol, the most-used drug

on American college campuses, is no more the solution to problems when mixed with fruit juice than when otherwise imbibed.

Who Am I?

I am more powerful than the combined armies of the world;
I have destroyed more men than all the wars of the nation;
I have caused millions of accidents and wrecked more homes
than all the floods, tornadoes and hurricanes put together.
I am the world's slickest thief. I steal billions of dollars each
year;
I find my victims among the rich and poor alike, the
young and the old, the strong and the weak.
I loom up to such proportions that I cast a shadow over every
field of labor.
I am relentless, insidious, unpredictable;
I am everywhere... in the home, on the street, in the factory,
in the office, on the sea, and in the air;
I bring sickness, poverty, and death.
I give nothing and take all;
I am your worst enemy.
Who am I? I am alcohol.

(Author Unknown.)

Village Advertiser Commentary

Only when millions of us individually confront our own drug dependency and make a personal commitment to eliminating drugs (including alcohol) from our lives will we free ourselves from addictions. A happy side-effect, were millions of us to make that commitment, would be a precipitous decline in crime rates.