

About You

By HARRIETT MUHAMMAD

DEAR HARRIETT: As a mother of teenagers, I'm getting quite concerned about the dope peddlers that hang around our high schools. A friend of mine is who really called my attention to the problem when she became the victim of circumstances. She found out that her husband was working in a big dope syndicate.

When she threatened to expose him she said he had arranged a frame up in which she was falsely arrested by police officers then drugged. When she came to her senses, she had been confined to a mental institution in which her husband had placed her. A few months later, when she was released, her husband had mortgaged all of their community property and she was left with nothing.

Since then we have worked together trying to fight this syndicate only to find that the responsible people just gave us the run-around. We have written letters and kept appointments with officials in an attempt to clean up our neighborhoods of dope because we know it is a serious threat not only to adults but to our budding teenagers.

My teenagers have been well instructed as to the dangers of dope addiction, but still I hate to have them in such an environment. What can a responsible citizen do to fight against such syndicates? It seems to me that something could and should be done to protect our youngsters.

MRS. B. S.
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

DEAR MRS. B. S.

You have touched upon two problems that most private citizens do not realize the severity of — dope peddling on high school campuses and the hooks big syndicates have into our official departments like the board of education and our law enforcement agencies. Of course, the syndicates don't have the power or pull with most officials, but they have enough so that they can op-

erate with minimum interferences.

I have had several letters from people, black and white, who have found out different things going on in their PTA's or among police officers that were illegal or against official policies. These people had pressed the issues only to discover that they had been branded as rabble rousers, odd balls, nuts and trouble makers in their communities.

Some were able to take their cases to court only to be defeated by legal costs or legal red tape. There isn't much that a few individuals can do. This is why our people, especially, have found it necessary to come together in some group form to get some action.

It will have to take more crises like the Watts riots, it seems, before ordinary citizens will learn the power of protest. They know what success others have had in the past, but they have yet to learn what they themselves are able to do. We wouldn't have many of these problems like the one you mentioned if people would stand up in mass protest. But so many people value their jobs or their careers and their own personal plans so much that they are unable to see what is going on around them.

It is these people—these ordinary law abiding, hard working people who mind their own business who will eventually bring this nation to its knees.

Something on your mind? Write and tell me about it.

Harriett Muhammad
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