

Batavia, O.

20th Nov. '57

Dear Tom,

I heard your remarks concerning the conditions prevailing in this country with regard to scholastic endeavor and the problems thereof.

Whatever 'izm' upon which you place the blame, my contention is, that it is unadulterated 'Americanizm' of 'laissez faire' which has been prevalent for the past thirty-seven years, to my knowledge. I was quick to notice such a state of affairs when I first set foot in New York when on a Western Hemisphere contract in 1920.

Rudeness was very evident amongst the 'teen-agers' and little notice taken by them of the admonitions of their parents in which case, I was witness to tantrums of this description by the twelve year old son of a friend of my uncle who lived in Brooklyn.

The father of the boy had a very prominent position as Assistant Manager of the Standard Oil Refinery of Queens County, Long Island and he had occasion to chastise the lad for playing truant (hookey) from school for two weeks.

After the chastisement, the boy said that he would fetch a 'cop' and when the police-officer arrived, he said to the father, "This boy reports to me that you have been beating him up." This police-officer was a big burly Irishman from the 'Owld Sod' and when the father told him why he chastised him, the Old-country Irishman said, "Oh, is that right, now?!" He then told the father to give the boy another 'pasting' for being rude to his parents and then he said, "I'LL give him one or two whacks, mesilf, for getting me climbing this long flight of stairs."

The trouble with the young people today is, that they will not do their homework because they want to look at television up until the time they go to bed. Upon arriving at the school the next morning, the teacher finds that there has been no homework done. It is very unfortunate that a great many of the parents are indifferent as to whether their children are educated or not but take the attitude that the world owes their children a living even if they were unqualified to take any kind of a position outside of pushing a hand-truck inside a factory. They did not realise that schooling was the greatest thing in their lives and that an education was a prerequisite to acquiring a good livelihood when they ultimately left school and where they would have to compete in the market for jobs that were worthwhile.

It seems to me that there is too much emphasis placed on sports such as basket-ball, baseball football in place of academics. This would tend to produce a nation of men with plenty of brawn but no brains.

You mention about the twenty 'musts' with respect to the schooling