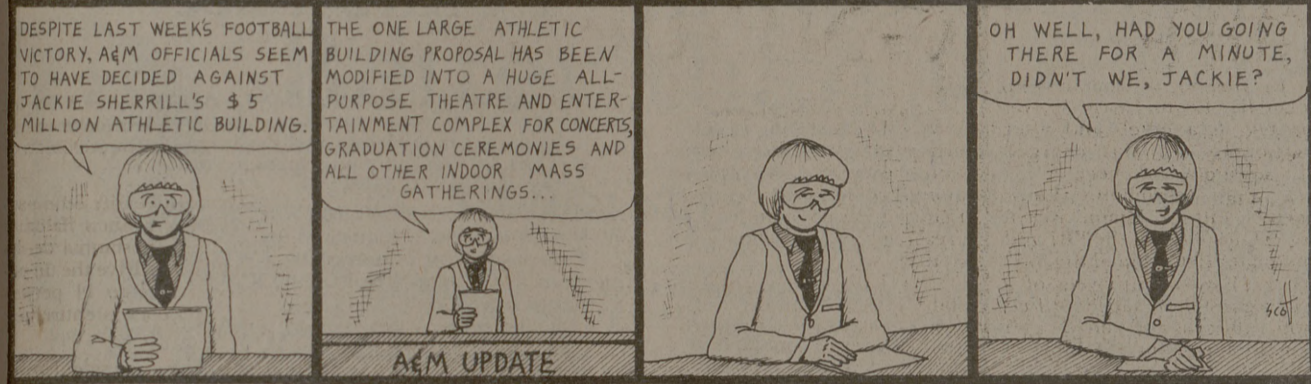


# national

## Warped

by Scott McCullar



## Halloween caution urged

Officials nationwide — fearful of the Tylenol killings and a number of copycat contaminations will "bring out the crazies" — urged parents to curb their kids' trick-or-treating on Halloween, and four Massachusetts towns banned the practice outright.

The gravity of the situation was not lost on the kids themselves.

"In this day and age, you can't trust anybody, not since those poisonings," said William Borowski, 9, of Dudley, Mass., which is forbidding trick-or-treating on Oct. 31.

"I think it's for our own good," Shaun Beauchese, also 9, agreed.

Stephanie Palazzo, 9, said, "I feel weird because we never got Halloween taken away from us."

Houston is still haunted by the 1974 Halloween trick-or-treat poisoning murder of Timothy O'Bryan, 8, by his father, Ronald. The city is trying to encourage daytime parties and closely supervised nighttime activities.

Ronald O'Bryan, called the "Candy Man" by other inmates on Death Row at the Texas De-

partment of Corrections, was scheduled to be executed on Halloween unless a federal judge delayed it. A hearing was scheduled today.

Chicago's Mayor Jane M. Byrne, citing the seven deaths in the area from cyanide-spiked Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules, urged parents to halt trick-or-treating, or limit it to homes of friends or acquaintances.

"I would not allow my children to take candy this particular Halloween, or anything else from anyone," she said.

Since the cyanide deaths from Sept. 29 to Oct. 2, similar cases have been reported in Florida, California, Colorado and Ohio, involving eyedrops, mouthwash and other consumer items laced with acids and poisons.

"This year, with the copycat versions of what happened here, we found not talking about it didn't help," said Illinois Attorney General Tyrone Fahner.

"So I have sent letters to the heads of PTAs and church groups telling them to have parties where they can control what is given to the kids."

Officials in four communities in Massachusetts — Dudley, Pal-

mer, Holland and Fitchburgh — said banning trick-or-treating was the best way to keep children safe.

"Something like the Tylenol poisonings seems to bring out the crazies," said Palmer, Mass., Selectman Stephen L. Marhele-wicz after the town board unanimously approved the ban.

Bernard J. Wielock, a member of the governing Board of Selectmen in Dudley, said, "We did not cancel Halloween. What

we did is ban trick-or-treating. We hate to do this, but we're concerned."

Logan, Ohio, residents shocked by the recent slaying-dismemberment of two teenagers, were limiting Halloween to an old-fashioned daylight parade and party in a blocked-off section of downtown.

Most police departments around the country have added stress to the warnings they issue every Halloween.

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