

Fables About Drug Use Are Plentiful

Nearly everyone has heard fables, fictions or fallacies about marihuana, perhaps like these:

"Smoke pot and you wind up hooked on heroin—man, it's cleaner than alcohol—it's the first step right into the psycho ward—there's just no reason to keep it illegal—why doesn't any one tell the truth about marihuana?"

None of these statements is based on scientific fact, but on half-fact or misinformation. The first statement, although wrong, stems from some studies showing that sizeable percentages of heroin addicts previously smoked marihuana (pot). The reverse is not necessarily true, although this adds no reasoning to the side of those who favor unrestricted marihuana.

Alcohol and marihuana are not comparable, as far as No. 2 goes. Moreover, the long-term effects of marihuana smoking are simply not known as yet.

As to No. 3, scientists have not proved that marihuana is a direct cause of mental illness. Nor have they proved that it prevents mental disorders or helps mental health.

There are some reasons on the legal side for restrictions on marihuana, as, for example, the indisputable fact

that science does not know very much about it. It does not appear, moreover, that mass, permissive, total population usage of an unknown but powerful mind-affecting drug is rational.

"Why doesn't anyone tell the truth about marihuana?" This despairing kind of cry is perhaps based on confusion brought about by those who favor taking all shackles off marihuana and who disseminate misinformation or slanted material rather than objective information.

Here are some facts about this controversial substance, entirely founded on what science now knows, not on guesses, rumors and wishful emotionalizing.

The smoking of marihuana is illegal in nearly every civilized country of the world. Nevertheless, with the possible exception of alcohol, it is today probably the most widely used intoxicant in the world.

Despite its current pervasiveness, scientists are quick to acknowledge significant gaps in their knowledge of marihuana's effects on man—and animals, too, for that matter.

The little research that has been done in the United States, and there has not been a great deal anywhere in the world, has principally used marihuana seized by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs which was supplied to qualified researchers.

But all natural marihuana is of uncertain potency, and seized materials are frequently unrefined and impure. Reliable research, whether in test tubes and analytic machines, on animals, or on man, can only be conducted if the drug is standardized, the potency constant.

This long-standing problem seems at last to have been largely solved. National Institute of Mental Health research grantees and others have succeeded in isolating a number of compounds in cannabis, the plant from which marihuana cigarette material comes.

In addition, they have determined the exact structure of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the probable main, active principle of marihuana. Thus, the production of uniform, synthetic or man-made

marihuana is now possible. With this compound, THC, sometimes called "liquid marihuana," scientists can at last run controlled, uniform experiments.

What is marihuana? Marihuana — also spelled "marijuana"—is a drug found in a plant (cannabis sativa) that grows in mild climate countries all around the world. Some of its nicknames are pot, grass, weed and Mary Jane.

How is it used? For use as a drug, the leaves and flowers are usually dried and crushed or chopped into small pieces. This green-colored product is rolled and smoked in cigarettes or pipes or can be sniffed or taken in food. Its sweetish odor is easily recognized. The smoke is harsh—it smells like burnt rope or dried grasses. Is marihuana used for medicinal purposes?

No. It has no known use in modern medicine. There are medical research studies seeking scientific information on it, but it is not used to treat or cure illness.

Statements that marihuana is "medically safe" are not supported by scientific evidence.

Do we know what marihuana does to the mind and body?

We do not know the physical effects fully. Long-term effects are absolutely unknown. The kind of research needed to learn the results of continued use has not yet been done. It is getting underway now, however, as pointed out.

Does marihuana affect judgment?

Yes, but not favorably. A person using marihuana finds it harder to make decisions that require clear thinking. He is open more easily to other people's suggestions. Doing anything that takes good reflexes and clear thinking is affected. It is, for example, dangerous to drive while under the influence of marihuana, just as it is with alcohol.

For a free leaflet on marihuana, write to Box 1080, NIMH, Washington, D. C. 20013.

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Carl W. Lewis Joins Expanding College Staff

ELIZABETH CITY—A Perquimans County native, Carl W. Lewis, Jr., has joined "Project COA" as an occupational counselor.

Project COA is funded by a Rockefeller Foundation grant and is aimed at finding and recruiting people who have proper motivation to take advantage of programs at College of the Albemarle which will benefit them.

Lewis attended Perquimans High School and was employed by the Peoples Bank and Trust Company in Hertford before accepting this present position. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Carl W. Lewis, Sr., live on Route 2, Hertford.

As occupational counselor Lewis will work with the under-employed and unemployed in Perquimans, Chowan and Gates counties. He is especially interested in young people.

Lewis, who is 21, said: "I feel that I can better approach a younger person since I myself am closer to that age group—and since I'm not considered because of my age to be part of 'the establishment'."

A member of the Perquimans Rescue Squad, Lewis is also assistant Boy Scout leader for the Hertford troop. He likes hunting, fishing and

other outdoor sports. Lewis said he has done who would like to do outdoor construction work and can work.

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FROM THE HERALD KITCHEN

Continued from Page 3

1-2-3 Chicken Stroganoff
2 whole broiler-fryer chicken breasts.
3 tablespoons butter or margarine.
2 tablespoons finely chopped onion.
½ teaspoon salt.
1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted.
1 can sliced mushrooms.
½ cup water.
½ cup sour cream.

Bone chicken breasts; remove skin. Cut each breast into 10 or 12 strips. Assemble remaining ingredients. Melt butter in a large skillet over high heat. Add chicken and onion; sprinkle with salt. Cook six minutes, stirring occasionally. Add mushroom soup, sliced mushrooms with liquid and water. Heat to boiling, stirring until mixture is smooth. Reduce heat; venience foods to turn out a blend in sour cream. Do not boil. Serve over hot noodles. Serves four.

There's a new kind of cuisine evolving these days compatible with today's way of living. It takes a basic food, such as chicken and combines it with companionable convenience foods to turn out a good, nonfuss dish. Here is one for your collection:

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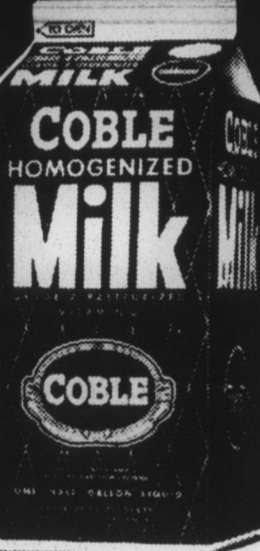
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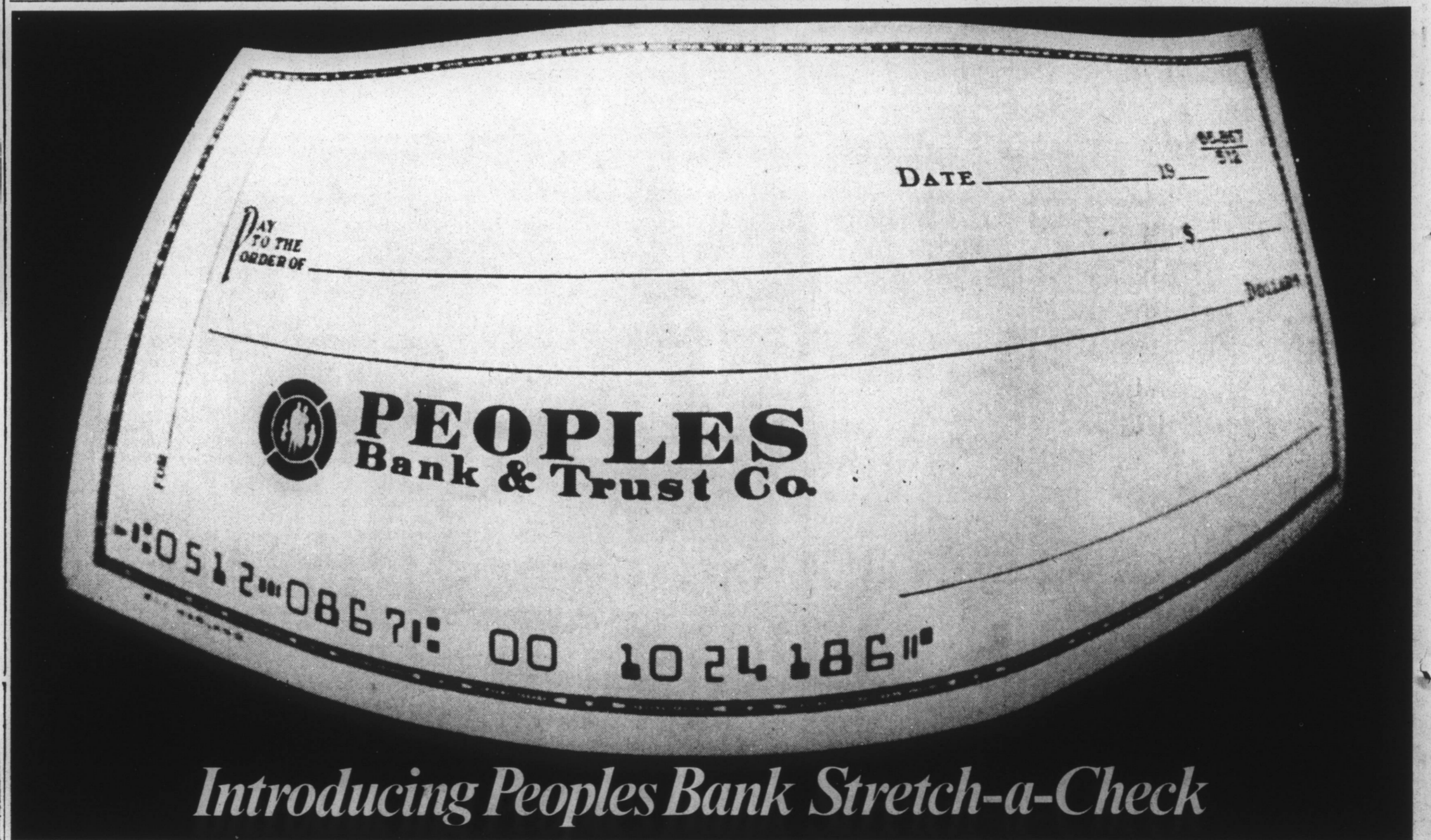
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