DAGGA: A REVIEW OF FACT AND FANCY*

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'Dagga' is our word for marihuana, hashish, bhang, or *Cannabis sativa* L. But dagga is also the name applied to 14 species of the plant *leonotis*, indigenous and common in South Africa. The word has come into our English language via Afrikaans which derived it from pure Hottentot 'daga'. It is only assumed that the idea in the Hottentot mind which attached the word to the plant cannabis had to do with its remarkable qualities.

The fact that the name dagga refers to both cannabis and *leonotis*, 2 plants growing wild and readily in South Africa, has in the past given rise to much confusion among those who have interested themselves in the 'dagga problem'. This confusion appears to be based on, or originate primarily from, the superficial similarity of appearance of the two species of plant, and different people hold different opinions about which species is the 'true' dagga. The confusion is confounded still more by the properties which some writers have attributed to *leonotis*, comparable with those of cannabis, but which have been denied by others. An editorial in the *Journal* during the editorship of Leipoldt, always an interesting controversialist, held that *leonotis* was the 'original dagga' but conceded that usage appeared to have firmly attached the name to cannabis, and for this reason we have been obliged to accept the word dagga in this relationship.

Watt and Breyer-Brandwijk, the eminent botanists, regard cannabis as the 'true' dagga. These 2 authors, as a result of their investigation into the properties of the 2 plants, concluded that the smoking of *leonotis* 'produced no symptoms apart from unpleasantness' But contrarily, *Die Afrikaanse Woordeboek* states unequivocally on its own authority 'die rook van die blare en jong stings van dieselde bedwelmende uitwerking het as by bogenoemde soorte (Cannabis)' but which can be differentiated from the latter by such names as kaffer-, klip-, knop-, koppies-, malkop-, perde-, rooie(wootie)-, strand- and velddags.

Here we have 2 apparently 'authoritative' but contradictory statements about the potential intoxicant properties of *leonotis*, and Watt and Breyer-Brandwijk have studied one variety of this series as far as the botanical minutiae are concerned but not with regard to the chemical properties. The practical evidence, however, indicates that *leonotis* is not the species of plant which is smoked in South Africa for enjoyment, because all 23 specimens produced in court in police prosecutions were without exception *cannabis* — indirect but acceptable evidence that it is dagga cannabis and not dagga *leonotis* which is smoked for the hedonistic pleasure it provides the smoker.

The fact that cannabis is prohibited by law in this country while *leonotis* may be freely grown, and that all convictions have been for the possession of cannabis, speaks volumes against *leonotis* having any of the virtues or vices of *cannabis*.

If we go back to the Hottentots' practice of using dagga, we can take it that the first description written in Southern Africa on the effects of cannabis was that by Governor Jan van Riebeeck in his diary. He observed: 'De Hau-cumguas, weleke... me di by sswelken, daar se dae ge sch, ses dye een droog kruijdt dat de Hottentos es eten ende dromeke van worden.' It is of some interest to note that Van Riebeeck used the word *een* and not *rooken*.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECTION

Van Riebeeck's diary informs us that the consumption of dagga was a well-established 'way of life' among the primitive Hottentots of the Cape before his arrival, and this fact raises interesting speculation about the origin of the habit among so aboriginal an ethnic group (Bushmen were also partakers of the weed) here at the southernmost tip of Africa, a custom that can be traced back to ancient times in the Middle East.

The plant has considerable agricultural and commercial importance, derived from the manufacture of fibre and oil for soap and oil-cake (which facts in themselves determine that the common hemp will always be with us). The surmised route for the propagation of the plant is, or was, along the ancient ocean highway from the eastern Mediterranean along the Red Sea and southern coasts of Asia to the shores of Hindustan—one of the oldest routes along which migration of races took place in olden times.

The presumption that the Hindi word *bhang* (*cannabis*) is the root of the Shangaan word *mbangi*, meaning dagga, has been justified. The implication extracted from this obvious identity of the 2 names for dagga, in 2 languages which have absolutely no etymological point of contact, is that the plant was first carried to the coast of Mozambique, which is the region of East Africa where Shangaan is spoken, by the Portuguese militant traders returning from India (*Cannabis sativa* *L. indica*). There it was planted and thence spread by name and proliferation inland and southwards to reach the Venda people in the Soutpansberg of the Southern Transvaal, into whose language it insinuated itself as *mbanzhe* (in which the Hindu origin can still be detected). But the transit from the Venda to the Zulus of Natal substituted the name *intangs*, and this in turn was replaced by dagga when it reached the Hottentots.

Other early observers along with Van Riebeeck have recorded the smoking of dagga by all the races of Southern Africa, Hottentot, Bushmen and Bantu. These indigenous inhabitants still adhere to the tradition that their ancestors have used dagga since time began, and so it is not possible to know how or when the custom of its social usage was introduced into any particular tribe.

This social usage among the Bantu is deserving of some additional comment if only to indicate the tribal and patriarchal approval of the practice among a people, like the Zulu, who are essentially a warrior-race. Very few Bantu women—with occasional exceptions among the elderly—smoked dagga and this temperance has been attributed to, but not adequately explained by, 2 tribal conditions: firstly, the payment of cattle by the husband as lobola for their wives, who were expected to render full service in return, did not encourage such a 'lustekkerland'
habit among the womenfolk; and, secondly, the fact that
as the women had to do the routine work of the tribe
there was no time for this kind of idleness.4

In times past the bad effects of excessive dagga smok­
ing, as with all excesses, were recognized for what they
were, and immoderate use of the weed was despised by
the elders of the tribe. Accustomed smokers used dagga
in moderation and in somewhat formal fashion; intemper­
ance was frowned upon then, and probably, among the
rural Bantu, it is even now.5

THE DAGGA DOCTRINES

Presently when dagga is being subjected to legislative,
sociological, pharmacological, ethological, deontological
and even philosophical inquisition in different parts of
the world where 'permissiveness' is accepted as a new way
of life, where established taboos have been displayed as
unacceptable superstitions by youth crusading against
ancestral authority, it is opportune to notice how the
Bantu, who have indulged themselves for centuries in the
drug, are convinced about the effect experienced with its
use. Their views agree in great measure with those of repu­
table investigators in the western world who have been
commissioned to evaluate the influence of its use upon
society.

The Bantu believed and have observed that dagga affects
different individuals differently. The effect is closely tied
to the inborn temperament of the smoker (or eater) of
dagga. They do not, despite the law's opposition, regard
the habit as reprehensible unless it be taken to excess.

The Zulu and Xhosa-speaking Bantu have not accepted
the official White man's thinking; they deny that anything
harmful arises from the moderate use of dagga. Bryant
has recorded in his account of the Zulu people that 'young
warriors were specially addicted and under the exciting
stimulation of the drug were capable of accomplishing
hazardous feats'. Here was reason enough for the young
bloods of the tribe! The Bantu, on the other hand, do not
regard the plant as having any aphrodisiac qualities; pa­
rents whose young nubial sons have shown little or no
interest in taking a wife have blamed the disinclination
towards marriage on dagga. They do not, despite the law's
opposition, regard the habit as reprehensible unless it be
taken to excess.

Wolff6 in South America, where the taking of
cannabis (marihuana) is regarded by the governing
authorities as a national evil, tried out the effects of the
drug on 50 non-selected individuals who were asked to
smoke it in a convivial environment without let or hin­
drance of any kind, and he was able to separate 14
different kinds of reactions. He was not able to predict
the type of reaction which would follow the smoking of
marihuana but he was satisfied that the reaction to the
drug was capable of revealing the true or real nature of
the smoker's character and personality.

In his group of 50 non-selected cases, only 7 did not
show aggressiveness. Wolff, contrary to the viewpoint
of the Bantu mentioned above, asserts that marihuana does
stimulate sexual propensity and can 'produce the psychic
state of a Don Juan'. And he had enough 'observed
material to demonstrate that marihuana can also create
criminal attitudes and acts'. He is also of opinion that
addiction leads to general mental deterioration.

The leaders among the Coloured people of South Africa

lean strongly towards Wolff's conclusion arrived at in
South America, and disagree with the opinion of the Bantu
in their own country. They recognize the dagga habit as
the companion of poverty, the cause of backwardness and
the accomplice of crime; all these leading to unemploy­
ment and disregard of personal respectability. They see
dagga as a symptom as well as a cause of these conditions.

But even here, among this population group with a long
experience of the use of dagga, there is a considerable
school of thought which does not believe the substance
to be harmful . . . in moderation. But they will concede
that dagga and alcoholic drinks (which are usually potent)
can produce a much more dangerous and intense intol­
erization than either alone, and that the effects of the com­
bination are always harmful.

The Commissioner of Police, mentioned in a report
of the authoritative Interdepartmental Committee on the
Abuse of Dagga,7 recommended the provision of severe
penalties for any form of traffic in the drug and that an
institution be established for the treatment of addicts. He
believed the consumption of dagga to be an important
contributing factor in the incidence of crime. Twenty-one
years ago the number of convictions for being in the
possession of dagga was 14 016, of which 185 were Whites,
2 950 Coloured, 205 Asiatic and 10 676 Bantu. These
were convictions all over South Africa in one year. The
charges were for one crime, that of being in possession
of dagga in whatever form, not having committed crimes
while under the influence of dagga. A sameness with a
difference.

More than 30 years ago Bromberg8 studied the effects of
cannabis upon a number of individuals, and although he
talked of toxic marihuana psychoses and described the
manifestations of this state in some detail, he nevertheless
concluded that 'countless persons use marihuana without
the development of an observable mental condition. In
the acute intoxication no permanent effect is observable
by psychiatric examination after the effects wear off in
1-3 days.' He found in general that early use of the drug
apparently did not predispose to crime. 'No positive re­
lationship could be found between violent crime and the
use of marihuana in cases observed in the psychiatric
clinic. No cases of murder or of sexual crimes due to
marihuana were established.' Bromberg also reported that
the lack of increased tolerance and the absence of demon­
strable symptoms argue against the theory that mari­
uhana is habit-forming and that the use of marihuana
is a 'sensual addiction in the service of the hedonistic ele­
ments of the personality'.

Bromberg does not appear to have changed his view­
point since his first publication, for Wolff flatly contradicts
his conclusions as being derived from 'material scarcely
adequate for such deductions'. The 'material' consisted of
observations made in courts-of-law, clinics and prisons,
and 'it is the nature of criminal tendencies not to mani­
fest themselves in the hospital, nor in the outpatient
department nor at the judicial cross-examination'. Nor
did Wolff consider the 'experimental conditions' to be
right for prisoners to be given marihuana to smoke in
surroundings of rigid discipline instead of the 'bad but
free environment to which they are accustomed'. Wolff
added a criticism of Bromberg's article by stating that
it appeared that Bromberg in an effort to combat widely-held and perhaps alarmist views of the dangers of marijuana had 'leaned too far back and minimized the long-term noxious effects'. The same criticism that was levelled by Wolff against Bromberg's investigation might be directed against a report of an investigation into the mental symptoms associated with the smoking of dagga conducted by the Commissioner for Mental Hygiene in South Africa and published in 1938. For all the participants in the trial were inmates of a mental hospital who were suffering from 9 varieties of mental illness, ranging from pure dagga psychosis to manic depressive psychosis. Any conclusions that may have been arrived at from this attempt must be considered invalid, and this despite the terms of reference: reading 'to arrange for a controlled investigation into the possible relationship of dagga-smoking with acute psychotic conditions and with the ultimate production of a state of mental degeneration in addicts'.

A scanning of the world press of the past 40 years reveals a remarkable constancy of lights and shadows which blur the truth about the use of cannabis. In South Africa around 1934 the daily press was critical of official opinion and made a case for the harmlessness of dagga smoking, pointing out its use among the Bantu where it showed no evidence of being habit-forming. The press appeared to disapprove of the fact that during the year ending in 1934, out of 5885 convictions under the terms of the 5th Schedule of the Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Act, 8527 were for the possession of dagga, the remaining 7 being for opium.

Yet, across the ocean in North America the Canadian Medical Association Journal
thought fit to devote an editorial that same year to the availability and effects of cannabis upon the youth of Canada, the drug having been smuggled in from the USA. It mentions that as long ago as 1931 cannabis cigarettes were being passed to boys and girls. It referred to the experience in all countries that hashish has a special appeal for the young, not that they crave the drug, at least at first, but they use it to appear "smart". They have not at any time been addicts of morphine, etc. Another point made was that the drug has a peculiar fascination for certain types of character, and because there is no depression or nausea following its use, this becomes an added attraction. The Lancet noticed this editorial and quoted that marijuana cigarettes were on sale in cabarets and night-clubs, were even hawked about to young boys and girls, and were peddled in dance-halls; and that the traffic in Indian hemp had attained the proportions of an industry with widespread ramifications. Opinion was also expressed that it was the heavy restrictions on the 'hard' drugs (heroin, cocaine) that induced the smoking of cannabis.

The New York Times published an article on the 'Increasing menace of marijuana' in the same year. According to the report there was little or no control exercised over the buying and selling of cannabis in the United States. There is no control today. So it cannot be justifiably said that circumstances pertaining to the traffic in dagga are any different, i.e. any better, or any worse; they are surely very much in statu quo.

The question arises: does enforcement or, rather, attempted enforcement of the law help? This leads us to The Times of London, which on 24 July 1967 published a very provocative statement signed by a set of scientists, doctors and intellectuals who urged that 'the law against marijuana is immoral in principle and unworkable in practice', and this was only one of many demands for more permissive tolerance of the drug. This modern attitude by quite influential people could have been a distorted echo of a leader in The Lancet in 1963 which suggested that the argument for legalizing the import and consumption of cannabis was more than any other drug under international control. Perhaps there is some significance in the fact that 2 countries with a vast experience of the smoking of cannabis, Egypt and South Africa, should separately and in different years have made special representations to the League of Nations on the subject of cannabis. In 1923 it was the express wish of South Africa that dagga be included in the list of narcotic drugs which, previously, had included almost only opium and its derivatives. Two years later the Egyptian delegate to the second conference on opium of the League stated that 30-60% of those patients suffering from insanity in Egypt were cases of 'chronic hashishism'.

Bourhill, in 1913, submitted his thesis to the University of Edinburgh on the evils resulting from the smoking of dagga among the native races of South Africa, and among the evils he included admissions of dagga lunacy to the mental hospitals. These lunatics were often dangerous to person and property. The recovery rate was high but the frequency of relapses supported suspicion that the continued habit was liable to produce a chronic psychosis. Blair, writing on this aspect of dagga addiction, stated simply, 'the cannabis smoker nearly always becomes an imbecile in time'.

A leading article in The Lancet of January 1969 appeared to sympathize with a proposal to lessen the penalties currently imposed upon anyone connected with the unlawful use of cannabis. The sympathy was activated by the summing up of a report on cannabis by the Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence, in England, which read, 'Not withstanding the limits of present knowledge, it is clear that cannabis is a potent drug having as wide a capacity as alcohol to alter mood, judgement and functional ability. In that sense, we agree . . . that cannabis is a "dangerous drug." But we think it is also clear that, in terms of physical harmfulness, cannabis is very much less dangerous than the opiates, amphetamines, and barbiturates, and also less dangerous than alcohol.' The British Medical Journal, in an editorial entitled 'Potted dreams', came out strongly against this proposed lessening of penalties for a drug that 'causes mental disorientation'. The Lancet could not uncover any reports of persistent
psychotic states following cannabis, and although acute psychoses are recognizable and usually pass away uneventfully, the existence of a persistent 'cannabis psychosis' was regarded as doubtful. Is it possible to reconcile some or all of these conflicting points of view?

THE INFLUENCE

The 'official' influence last appeared in the British Pharmaceutical Codex of 1949, for the monographs on cannabis have been omitted from the later editions. After a discussion of the nature of the constituents of the herb it elaborated thus: 'Cannabis depresses first the higher critical faculties and later perceptive sensory and motor areas of the cerebrum. In some persons, particularly orientals, it produces a type of inebriation with a feeling of pleasantness and marked disorientation; later decreased sensitivity to touch and pain, as well as muscular lethargy and relaxation precede the onset of a comatose sleep in which respiration is slowed and the pupils are dilated. In other persons it may cause only lethargy with some irritability of temper. Cannabis is a habit-forming drug and habitués often become insane; amongst orientals it is taken as a drink or conserve or smoked in pipes or cigarettes under the names of chavas, ganjah, guaza, bang, and hashish; in South Africa it is smoked under the name of dagga and in Mexico and Brazil it is the active ingredient of marihuana cigarettes. Cannabis is too unreliable in action to be of value in therapeutics as a cerebral sedative or narcotic and its former use in medicine is now confined to the treatment of chronic patients, looked ill and were emaciated despite enormous appetite and thirst. A significant observation which she makes from her sad experiences with consumers of the drug is that she dreaded 'a crop of cannabis psychosis to supplement the diminishing mental hospital population'.

Thirty-five years ago Fleming had clinical experience of a 'new' case of acute dagga psychosis which was presented by Baker-Bates, with detailed clinical appraisal of the condition as it manifested itself in a healthy young woman with an English cultural background. It arose in a curiously interesting fashion. A young man who had grown his own cannabis plant at home (having obtained the seed from a quantity of parrot food) made a cigarette from the flowering plant which he smoked out of pure curiosity originating from his reading on the subject. His delightful loss of sense for actual time and space dimensions, his vivid dreams or hallucinations and subsequent drowsiness proved of such interest to his fiancee that her curiosity was aroused, for she was incredulous of her fiance's experience. She tried two ords of a cigarette made from the top of a fruity plant.

Soon afterwards she fell asleep and a few minutes later, when disturbed, awoke with a start and showed apprehension. Her eyes were bright, her hands were twitching, and she appeared intoxicated. She asked where she was, probably being deceived by hallucinations, but seemed happy. Fifteen minutes later she was taken for a short walk which was interrupted by outbursts of laughter and of affection. Her speech became slurred from dryness of the mouth and she was unsteady. Twenty minutes later she was taken to a doctor who recorded that she was pale, but able to stand and walk, although feeling dizzy. She was very excited and talkative and made stupid purposeless movements with her hands. She was highly emotional towards her companion; at one moment gay, she was next anxious and said she felt 'enclosed'. She experienced the passage of time and was confused about spatial dimensions. Her tongue and mouth felt parched and words were pronounced with difficulty while sentences lapsed into incoherences. Her eyelids were half-closed, while the pupils were pronounced with difficulty while sentences lapsed into incoherences. Her eyelids were half-closed, while the pupils were

CANNABIS AND ALCOHOL

These two drugs are often compared but the resemblance under close observation of the 2 forms of intoxication is only superficial. A brief description of the effects of imbibed alcohol on the human being, written 150 years ago, cannot be improved upon. The pleasure given by alcohol is always rapidly mounting, and tending to a crisis, after which it only slowly declines. In comparison the effect of cannabis (when of good quality), once effective, remains...
stationary for 8-10 hours. The first is a case of acute, the second of ‘chronic’, pleasure; the one is a flickering flame, the other a steady and equable glow. Wine disorders the mental faculties. Cannabis enables one to say sharp and witty things. Pleasant ideas flit through the mind with a wonderful rapidity, so that time seems much extended. Alcohol robs a man of his self-possession. Cannabis taken moderately reinforces physical strength. Alcohol 'unseats the judgement, and gives a preternatural brightness and a vivid exaltation to the contempts and the admirations, to the loves and the hatreds, of the drinker'. Cannabis produces a pleasurable sensation of mild intoxication and the smoker or eater is particularly gay, joyous and pleased with everything. He will laugh and smile on the slightest provocation. Both give 'an expansion to the heart and the benevolent affections'; but cannabis does not, as with alcohol, give rise to 'the sudden development of kind-heartedness, always more or less of a maudlin and a transitory character, which exposes it to the contempt of the bystander. Men shake hands, shed tears, and swear eternal friendship—no mortal knows why; and the animal nature is clearly uppermost. True it is that even wine up to a certain point, and with certain men, rather tends to exalt and to steady the intellect... it may advantageously affect the faculties, brighten and intensify the consciousness and give to the mind a feeling of ponderibus librata suis'.

However, there is this likeness that alcohol and cannabis can both show a man's true character. Alcohol, however, will 'constantly lead a man to the brink of absurdity and extravagance; and beyond a certain point, it is sure to volatilize and to disperse the intellectual energies. A man who is inebriated, or tending to inebriation, is, and feels that he is, in a condition which calls up into supremacy the merely human, too often the brutal, part of his nature.'

There is this other very marked difference: Alcohol is notorious for that extremely unpleasant state of mental and physical distress which in the vernacular goes by the name 'hangover', which can vary considerably in its unhappy manifestations according to the types of alcohol imbibed and other associated means of raising the spirits. Cannabis, on the contrary, will permit the user to awaken refreshed even though his surroundings may feel unreal for an hour or so. There is usually no headache. An excellent appetite is a common sequel.

**DISCUSSION**

Although in South Africa very little has been published in the medical journals about the clinical aspects associated with indulgence in dagga, its age-old and widespread use in certain sections of our population has evolved an argot about itself that is, perhaps, more informative of its short-term and long-term effects than any number of controlled studies.

Regular smokers recognize a good-quality dagga by its smell and by rubbing it with the fingers, and for this they will pay high prices. They know also that 'good' dagga is only produced in certain areas where both heat and a good rainfall favour abundant growth and transpiration with consequent concentration of resins in the leaf. This is of great meaning and it demands serious consideration by all those who may be concerned in assessing the harmlessness or evils in connection with cannabis. Wolff was astutely aware of these factors when he was investigating the plant in South America and Brazil. He said its 'action is destructive of both character and intelligence' but only after recognizing that any 'delirium' depends upon the concentration of the drug according to its locality of growth and on the sufficiency or not of the resin in the plants due to particular climate and soil. This I believe to be the nub of the disagreements and inconsistency associated with experience, thoughts and opinions about cannabis. It is grown all over the world in different climates and soils, and from all over the world we get different reports and impressions of its effects upon human beings. Hence we get comments made such as 'hashish has been in general use among Eastern peoples as a means of producing ecstasy from remote antiquity' but in that part of the world the user takes the dried flowering tops of **cultivated** female plants which are coated with resin (gunjah or ganga), or the resin he scraps off the leaves or the dried leaves themselves, and as with the hashish eaters of the Middle East (Persia, Arabia, Egypt) the resin is compounded into a flavoured sweetmeat or syrup. This method of ingestion acts somewhat differently from smoking. With high dosage extraordinary feats of valour, derring-do, or running amuck become manifest, for it was in this way that the assassin sect at the time of the early Crusades excited their devoted exterminators to remove unwanted individuals, their zeal for the job being heightened by the consumption of the drug.

If the drug be taken by mouth, absorption is greatly aided if it is taken an hour before a meal. Its action is then felt within 2 hours. If it is taken after a meal no result may be detectable for as long as 6 hours. Of the combined effects of stimulation and depression of the cerebral cortex when the drug is taken by mouth, it is the latter effect which is said to predominate.

In South Africa the general custom for seeking a degree of intoxication has for long been that of smoking the herb. A method popularly practised before legal prohibition, but now only occasionally, is to smoke it through water held in the mouth, or kept in the dagga pipe, hence the expression 'die daggaapp laat gorreI'. Bantu, Bushmen, Hottentots and Coloureds used essentially the same method. By drawing the smoke through water in a pipe the smoker does not have to hold water in his mouth, the objective being to cool the fumes; an accompanying physical change is a condensation of the volatile active principle before it enters his lungs. Prohibition has rendered this method not readily practicable, for it demands relaxation and leisure; one result of this is to make the smokers draw harder on pipe or cigarette, and faster, so generating more heat and volatilizing more of the principle to enter their lungs.

Besides the quality or effectiveness of the plant varying greatly according to the environmental conditions of climate, soil, season and so on, as mentioned the state of the individual smoking it is also of much importance. There is considerable variation of cannabis and considerable variation of personality; the variety of combination of the 2 factors appears to produce a variety of symptoms or states of euphoria. There is a striking similarity here with opium. 'The varieties of the effect produced on
different constitutions are infinite." It could well be this factual variety of response to the intake of dagga that may have something to do with the variety of impressions which have been uttered. Cannabis is reputed to cause sexual excitement, but there are many who deny this; if there is evidence of sexual excitement the psychological make-up of the smoker probably has much to do with it. The lack of inhibition induced by the drug's erotic charm and images may be conducive to this effect.

SUMMARY

This is a review of practically all the factors both real and unreal which appear to motivate the opinions and actions of many enquirers and authorities who are concerned with the growing world menace of drug addiction, but with dagga in particular. The conclusions arrived at by special investigators and committees about the effects of dagga on the human being are that, in the main, they are detrimental to man, physically, mentally, and morally; that if it does not produce psychotic states it does produce very definite moral deterioration. If these conclusions are accepted on the evidence available by controlling governmental authority they could well find critics who also, on the evidence available, could declare that the conclusions are too rigid and even exclusive of facts which should be seriously considered before any legislative action is introduced.

REFERENCES


DAGGA AND DRIVING*

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This communication is concerned with a topic that has not yet been publicly discussed or expressed. It is the outcome of inquiry into the problems pertaining to the indulgence in dagga by our so-called permissive society which has erupted all over the world, bearing in mind the indigenous characteristics and culture of the different regions.

In The Times of 24 July 1967 a conglomerate group of scientists, doctors and intellectual types asserted that 'the law against marihuana is immoral in principle and unworkable in practice'. This is one of the various declarations which have been uttered in recent years for the abrogation of much of the law and the associated ideas against the taking of cannabis or dagga.

In the summary of the report of the Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence it was stated that 'cannabis is a potent drug having as wide a capacity as alcohol to alter mood, judgement and functional ability', and The Lancet, citing this summary, agreed that it is a dangerous drug in that particular respect.

The purpose of this paper is to stress the considerable danger inherent in that 'alteration of mood, judgement and functional ability', and the driving of a motor vehicle. I know of no conviction for dangerous driving while 'under the influence' of dagga, but the reasons for this are pretty obvious. It is difficult enough to bring in a verdict of dangerous driving while under the influence.