

## Tobacco Institute Cites Gains In Nation's Health

WASHINGTON — The Tobacco Institute, Inc. today cited official figures on the improving health and longevity of the American people as a challenge to "health scares" attacking the use of tobacco.

A pamphlet entitled "Tobacco and the Health of a Nation" notes that ever since tobacco began to be enjoyed by people throughout the world, its opponents have always attempted to make extreme charges against its use.

In announcing publication of the pamphlet, Edward F. Ragland, vice president of the Tobacco Institute, said, "This leaflet gives facts and figures from U.S. Government and other sources showing the tremendous advances made in the health of our people since the beginning of this century. Tribute should certainly go to the medical profession and the drug industry, as well as to our high standards of nutrition, for helping to give us a longer, healthier life.

"Those who attack cigarettes by blaming them for all kinds of health problems seem to overlook the fact that these health improvements have also occurred during the same period that the cigarette was constantly gaining widespread favor as the most popular form of tobacco use."

Major points shown in the leaflet are:

1. More Americans are living longer today than ever before, with life expectancy higher for every age group. The average length of life in the U.S. has risen from about 47 years to nearly 70 years in this century.

2. Death rates from major lung ailments in 1900 were 700 per cent higher than they are today, with lung cancer included. These rates have dropped from about 430 deaths per 100,000 in 1900 to around 60 per 100,000 today.

3. Since 1928, age-adjusted death rates for major heart diseases, which allow for more people living

into older age brackets, have declined from over 500 per 100,000 population to slightly over 400 per 100,000 today, and now are lower than at any other period in this century.

4. The average height and weight of young men have shown a steady increase since 1900. The physical measurements of freshmen recorded at annual enrollments by one major university have gone up more than two inches in height and more than 20 pounds in weight since the turn of the century.

"Those who are against tobacco will probably continue to try to scare the life out of those who like to use tobacco — regardless of the facts," Mr. Ragland added.

The pocket-sized, six-page folder is being distributed by The Tobacco Institute, Inc., 910 Seventeenth Street, N.W. Washington 6, D.C. The Institute is an organization of manufacturers of cigarettes smoking tobacco, chewing tobacco and snuff.

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## Blowing Statistical Smoke Rings

The tobacco industry has been the victim in recent years of statistical studies which have caused many to jump to conclusions that the figures don't precisely prove.

So the Tobacco Institute of Washington, D.C., retorts with some statistics which lead as illogically to the opposite conclusions. The figures could cause people to argue that tobacco is good for health. (The Institute makes no such claim.)

Cigaretts, the principal target of the critics of smoking, have increased steadily in popularity since World War I. But the general health of the American people has increased even more dramatically.

Cigaretts have often been linked with diseases of the lungs — influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis and lung cancer — but the death rate from these diseases has shown a steady decline since 1900, with the terrible flu epidemic of 1918 as an

exception. The death rate has dropped from more than 300 per 100,000 in 1920 to slightly more than 50 now. And heart disease, which has shown considerable increase, has actually declined since 1928 when the statistics are age adjusted.

The average life span has shown a dramatic increase from about 55 in 1920 to almost 70 now.

These figures, of course, prove nothing one way or another about tobacco. We don't know whether or how much the health and longevity would have been improved if the nation had sworn off cigarettes in 1920.

One set of statistics offered by the Institute does seem to provide evidence against one ancient notion about cigarettes. Since 1900, Yale freshmen have been gradually increasing in height and weight. If cigarettes did actually stunt the growth of boys, there should have been a decline.