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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Ad hoc Committee of the Principal Opium-producing Countries

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INTRODUCTION

The Ad hoc Committee met at the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Ankara from 21 November to December 1949 and held a total of meetings. In addition, the representatives of Governments of the principal opium-producing countries held a number of private meetings.

The League of Nations worked for many years on the problem of limiting the annual production of raw opium to that required for the medical and scientific needs of the world, and its plans for bringing the production of this important narcotic raw material under international control had reached an advanced stage when the second world war broke out. After the end of the war the United Nations again took up the task, but in the seven intervening years new factors had altered the problem in detail, if not in essence, and it was considered that the approach should be correspondingly modified to take account of them.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, to which the responsibility for the work had been transferred, accordingly decided, with the approval of the Economic and Social Council, that the problem should be tackled by stages, and that the first step would be for representatives of the Governments of those countries where the greater part of the world's supply of raw opium was produced to agree on how the limited production of the future was to be apportioned among them.

It was primarily to discharge this task that the Ad hoc Committee was called into being, and it was conscious of the great responsibility for the future success of the international control of narcotic drugs, and for the well-being of mankind to which that control was ultimately directed, thus laid upon it.

The Committee approached the very considerable difficulties inherent in reaching an agreement of this kind, and proceeded to elaborate in some detail a proposed structure for an interim agreement under which Governments would be able to give practical effect to their determination to limit the production of raw opium to medical and scientific needs. It unanimously agreed that this limitation should be based on estimates of their opium requirements to be furnished annually by Governments to a co-ordinating authority, and should be given

effect at national level by Government opium monopolies which would operate on a generally uniform pattern in producing countries whose Governments had become parties to the proposed interim agreement. It also drew up a plan for an international purchasing and selling agency which would apply the concept of the national opium monopoly on the international plane. This innovation in the field of international relations was considered by the Committee as an essential part of the final solution of the allied problems of drug addiction and the illicit traffic in narcotics, since it would render valuable assistance in eliminating the considerable over-production of opium which now feeds this trade.

The Committee was aware that the next stage in the development of the proposed interim agreement should be the consideration of its proposals by a joint meeting of representatives of the principal drug manufacturing countries and of representatives of the principal opium-producing countries with a view to the elaboration of a draft interim agreement for the approval of the Economic and Social Council.

I. ORGANISATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Representation at the session

(a) The five Members of the Ad hoc Committee were represented as follows:

INDIA	...	Mr. V.H. Coohlo	
IRAN	...	Dr. A. Amini	
		Mr. Tabatabay	(Alternate)
		Dr. R. Ispahany	(Alternate)
TURKEY	...	Dr. N. Karabuda	
		Dr. C. Or	(Alternate)
		Dr. C. Kiper	(Alternate)
		Mr. S. Qelobi	(Alternate)
		Mr. F. Diker	(Alternate)
		Professor C. Tariman	(Advisor)
		Professor V. Tayşi	(Advisor)
		Professor K. Köylü	(Advisor)
		Mr. A. Çakman	(Advisor)
		Mr. M. Gökgöl	(Advisor)
		Mr. H. Balkan	(Advisor)
		Mr. V. Gürün	(Advisor)
		Mr. S. Kayihan	(Advisor)

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YUGOSLAVIA	..	Mr. V. Kushovitch	
		Mr. D. Nikolitch	(Alternate)
		Mr. D. Georgijevski	(Advisor)

(b) The following Members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs were represented by observers:

CHINA	...	Mr. Jon Ki-Sin
EGYPT	...	Dr. M. Labib
FRANCE	...	Mr. P. Susini
NETHERLANDS	...	Mr. E.S.E. de Jongh
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	...	Mr. F. Morrill

(c) Mr. S. Krasovec attended in his capacity as Chairman of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

(d) Mr. L. Steinig, Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, represented the Secretary-General.

2. Opening of the Session

His Excellency, Mr. K. Bayazit, Minister for Hygiene and Social Welfare, welcomed the Ad hoc Committee on behalf of the Government of Turkey.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The provisional agenda (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.3), which read as follows, was unanimously adopted:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of the Chairman.
3. Consideration of the views and observations of Governments, called for in paragraphs 3 and 5 of the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to consider the desirability of convening a conference to conclude an interim agreement for limiting the production of opium to medical and scientific needs (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.2).
4. Questions to be considered by the Ad hoc Committee in accordance with its terms of reference:
 - (a) methods of determining world requirements of opium for medical and scientific needs;
 - (b) methods of allocating exports of opium;
 - (c) the establishment of Government monopolies, and the limitation of the production of opium; and
 - (d) the establishment of an international purchasing and selling agency.

5. Other business.

4. Election of the Chairman

The Ad hoc Committee unanimously elected as its Chairman His Excellency Mr. A.R. Tarhan, President of the Turkish Red Crescent Society.

5. Communication from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

The Committee had before it document E/CN.7/AC.1/L.2/Add.1 containing a translation of the text of a letter dated 18 November 1949 addressed to the Secretary-General by the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations setting forth the views of the Government on the decision of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to convene the Committee.

The Committee took note of the decision of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics not to be represented at its meetings.

II. LIMITATION OF THE PRODUCTION OF RAW OPIUM

6. Basis of Limitation

The Committee had before it a Memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.2) giving the views and observations of the Governments of India, Iran, Turkey and Yugoslavia requested in the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to consider the desirability of convening a conference to conclude an interim agreement for limiting the production of raw opium to medical and scientific needs (E/1361: E/CN.7/186, Annex G).

The representative of Iran said that his country had long been in favour of preventing abuses in the use of opium and of limiting its use to medical and scientific needs, and had indeed taken steps over a number of years to achieve those aims, even though such action had already demanded considerable economic sacrifices. All that Iran asked was that a fair share of the limited production should be allocated to her and that this share should be based on the total volume of her opium exports in past years. She should also be entitled to look to friendly countries for economic assistance to enable her to bear the further sacrifices which the reduction in this important crop would impose on her.

The representative of Yugoslavia favoured a quota system for the limitation of opium exports rather than the system of free orders, since the latter would allow the importing countries to dominate the world market. A quota system would moreover ensure to producing countries a relatively stable volume of exports over a prolonged period, which would

allow better agricultural and economic planning. He considered that the quota allocated to each producing country should be based on that country's exports for medical and scientific needs during the years 1925-1941, since exports since 1941 had been greatly affected by the abnormal conditions caused by the second world war. Further, quotas based on total exports would prejudice the exports of Turkey and Yugoslavia, which had in the past been the chief regular suppliers of the medical market; and it was conceivable that such a basis for quotas might even result in an increase rather than in a decrease in production. India and Iran should certainly be compensated for the loss of their Far Eastern markets, but not in the form of increased shares of the export trade for the medical market.

The representative of India informed the Committee that the Central Government had taken up a series of resolutions, adopted by a conference held in New Delhi in August 1949, in continuance of its policy, of which the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had been informed during its fourth session, to reduce by ten per cent each year the use of opium for other than strictly medical and scientific needs; such use would consequently have been abolished at the end of the ten years. Since that policy had been formulated, total prohibition of such use had been decreed in the Province of Assam.

The first of the above mentioned resolutions recapitulated the policy of achieving the complete prohibition of the non-medical use of opium during the next ten years, but left each Province or State at liberty to do so sooner if possible. The second resolution called on Provincial and State Governments to curtail the distribution of opium even to registered addicts, and recommended that the whole system of such distribution be brought under strict control by means of a system of medical certificates. The third resolution imposed immediate prohibition of the use of opium for quasi-medical purposes in all ports and coastal towns.

The foregoing measures demonstrated the desire of the Government to hasten the abolition of the quasi-medical use of opium, but it had to be stressed that until such abolition was complete India would need to produce opium for

that purpose.

The representative of Turkey reminded the Committee that since 1933 all activities connected with the production of, and trade in, opium had been strictly controlled except the domestic trade, to control which a draft bill was at present before Parliament. For the past seventeen years Turkey had done everything in her power to limit the production of opium, although that production was of very considerable economic importance to her. For the future, she would be quite satisfied with the quota system for exports, provided allocations were equitably established and based on the quantities exported by producing countries over the last fifteen years for medical and scientific needs.

The Representative of the Secretary-General gave the Committee a resumé (see summary record of the third meeting, E/CN.7/AC.1/SR.L.3) of the problems which would require solution if the limitation of production of raw opium to medical and scientific needs was to be achieved, and drew the Committee's attention to certain lines of approach to these problems which the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had considered during its fourth session.

7. World Requirements for Medical and Scientific Needs

The Representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that two methods were available for calculating the annual world requirements of raw opium for medical and scientific needs: an indirect method based on the estimates of needs in morphine furnished by Governments to the Permanent Central Opium Board in accordance with the 1931 Convention, and a direct method based on estimates of opium needs which Governments could be required to furnish under the proposed interim agreement.

The Committee unanimously expressed itself in favour of a direct method based on estimates to be furnished by Governments.

III. FORMULATION OF THE PROPOSED INTERIM AGREEMENT

8. Estimates of Opium Requirements

The representative of India introduced an outline of an article for incorporation in the proposed interim agreement on the subject of the estimates of their annual requirements of opium which Governments would be required to furnish (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.5/Rev.1).

The Committee unanimously decided to adopt the outline of the "Article on Estimates".

9. Allotment to Producing Countries of Shares of Opium Sales

(This section of the Report will be published later)

10. Government Opium Monopolies

The Representative of the Secretary-General, at the request of the Committee, submitted an outline of an article on the constitution and functioning of the opium monopolies to be operated by those Governments of producing countries which became parties to the proposed interim agreement.

After making minor drafting changes, the Committee unanimously decided to adopt the outline of "Article on Government Monopolies" (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.8/Rev.2).

At the suggestion of the representatives of Iran and Yugoslavia, the Committee unanimously decided that in subparagraph (c) of paragraph 3 of the article the words "other than the Government itself" should be construed as meaning "other than the Government itself or Government enterprises".

11. Co-ordinating Authority and International Purchasing and Selling Agency

The Committee considered a number of proposals put forward independently by the representatives of India and Iran on the co-ordinating authority and on the international purchasing and selling agency (co-ordinating authority E/CN.7/AC.1/L.9; international purchasing and selling agency E/CN.7/AC.1/L.6, E/CN.7/AC.1/L.6/Rev.1 and E/CN.7/AC.1/L.7), which were finally combined in a proposal introduced jointly by the representatives of those two Governments as document E/CN.7/AC.1/L.12.

At the instance of the representative of India, the Committee took note of the special conditions obtaining with regard to quasi-medical uses of opium within that country, and to India's exports of small quantities of opium for similar purposes to certain territories with which she had traditional political or economic ties, or to which she stood in close geographical propinquity. The Committee accordingly recognised the need for modifying, by means of an annex to the proposed interim agreement, the general provisions of the article on the co-ordinating authority and the international purchasing and selling agency (as given in the outline in document E/CN.7/AC.1/L.12), in so far as India's relations with the latter body would be concerned, and in so far as might prove necessary to take account of such quasi-medical uses of opium.

The Committee was, however, aware that the need for such modifications would be only temporary, in view of the Government of India's declared intention to suppress entirely the quasi-medical use of opium inside the country within a period of ten years, and to reduce progressively her traditional exports for such purposes.

At the request of the representative of Turkey, the Committee unanimously decided that the rules and regulations governing the operations of the international purchasing and selling agency should contain, inter alia, the following provisions:

- " (a) Should the Government monopoly of a producing country request that its opium be disposed of to a particular importing country, or to particular importing countries, the Agency shall, so far as may be practicable, comply with the request;
- (b) should an importing country request the Agency to supply opium from a certain producing country, the Agency shall, so far as may be practicable, comply with the request; and
- (c) the Agency shall in every case inform an importing country of the country of origin and trade mark of the opium with which it is being supplied. "

The Committee took note of the fact that the acceptance by Yugoslavia of the proposed mode of operation of the international purchasing and selling agency would be on the understanding that the Government would examine the possibility of reconciling existing bilateral trade treaties to which it was party with the functioning of the agency.

The Committee finally unanimously decided to adopt the outline of "Article on the Co-ordinating Authority and the International Purchasing and Selling Agency" (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.12).

12. Quality Control

The Committee considered the outline of an article designed to ensure that the opium which the Government opium monopolies of producing countries would sell to the international purchasing and selling agency under the proposed interim agreement should conform to certain quality specifications.

The Committee unanimously decided to adopt the outline of "Article on Quality Control" (E/CN.7/AC.1/L.10).

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IV. DECISIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

13. Resolution of December 1949

The Committee unanimously decided to present its findings and recommendations in the form of a single resolution, which the Secretary-General would be requested to lay before the Commission on Narcotic Drugs during the latter's fifth session. On December 1949 it accordingly unanimously adopted the following resolution:

(The text of the resolution will be published later)