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## COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Friday, 29 November 1946 at 10:30 a.m.

## Present:

Chairman:	Colonel Sharman	(Canada)
Vice-Chairman:	Dr. S. Tubiasz	(Poland)
Rapporteur:	Dr. Szeming Sze	(China)
	Mr. M. A. Zaki	(Egypt)
	Dr. A. Ismail	(Egypt)
	Mr. G. Bourgois	(France)
	Mr. Greenfield	(India)
	Mr. N. Entezam	(Iran)
	Dr. J. Quevedo Bazan	(Mexico)
	Mr. J. H. Delgorge	(Netherlands)
	Mr. J. A. Lazarte	(Peru)
	Mr. F. Belbez	(Turkey)
	Major W. H. Coles	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. J. Anslinger	(United States of America)
	Mr. V. Zuev	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
	Mr. S. Krasoves	(Yugoslavia)
	Mr. H. May	President Permanent Opium Drug Supervisory Body
Secretariat:	Mr. Steinig	Director Narcotics Division
	Mr. Pastuhov	

Continuation of the discussion on the resolution concerning the abolition of Opium smoking in the Far East. (document E/C.S.7/16).

DECISION: The draft resolution moved by the representative of the United States and seconded by the representative for China was adopted unanimously without further discussion.

Mr. BOURGOIS (FRANCE) stated: "the problem and in fact the all important problem of opium smoking which was raised in 1909 at the Shanghai Conference has at last been resolved - in a debate remarkable for its serene atmosphere which promised much for the future."

/In Chapter III



In Chapter III of the "Book of Rites" Confucius recommended the establishment, under the name of "Great Union", of a vast association of peoples who "would extend the conception of welfare not only to include all nationals, of which each State was inclined to cherish its own, but also all individuals without distinction".

Twenty-five centuries had passed. The "Great Union" so earnestly desired by the Chinese Philosopher and Statesman had been brought into being, not at Peking, but at Geneva and later at Lake Success. And now its first care had been to fight the scourge which afflicted above all the populations of the Far East. The dream of Confucius had thus become a reality.

DECISION: On the suggestion of Mr. ANSLINGER (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) it was agreed that the remarks of the representative for France, and those made by the representative for China on the same subject at the previous meeting, would be included in the Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

#### Consideration of the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs

The CHAIRMAN called for comments on the section dealing with raw opium in document E/C.S.7/10, prepared at the request of the Secretariat, by Mr. John W. Bulkley of the United States Treasury Department.

#### India

Mr. GREENFIELD (INDIA) took note of a suggestion by the Chairman that the Government of India be asked to make a distinction in future reports between raw and prepared opium.

Mr. ANSLINGER (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) pointed out that under the section concerning the United States (page 6), two further references appeared to the situation with regard to raw opium of Indian origin.

Seizures of Indian raw opium on vessels coming from British ports had continued to be considerable during the war and constituted a serious enforcement problem in the United States. Much of the smuggled opium was purchased by Chinese crews in Liverpool. Some seizures of Iranian opium

/had also



had also been made, but quantities positively identified as of Indian origin amounted to some 500 kgs. between 1941 and 1945.

The CHAIRMAN said that Canada had faced the same serious problem, complicated by war conditions. In order not to impede the rapid turn-around of vitally needed ships, the Canadian authorities had attempted to make a distinction between serious cases of gang activity, and cases in which the smugglers involved had procured the drug for their own use. It was sometimes found that, on arrival in port, a seaman would take four days' leave and board a train or 'plane. Suspicion was thus aroused, the man was searched, and a seizure was made. Colonel SHARMAN added that the price in the illicit market had reached \$900. a pound in Montreal, which had attracted most of the smugglers. In the meantime the Canadian Government had difficulty in obtaining sufficient licit supplies to meet the requirements of sick people.

Major COLES (UNITED KINGDOM) called attention to the contents of document E/C.S.7/15 concerning the opium traffic in the United Kingdom from 1931 to 1945, and the considerable increase in this traffic during the war years due to the closing of certain shipping routes and the necessity for the traffickers to find other routes. Opium which was bought in Bombay for about 15/- a pound, was sold in Liverpool for from £ 7.10s. to £ 10, and in the United States for from \$800. - \$900. for the same quantity. The risk was thus offset by the profit to be made.

Before the war there had been no regular traffic in the United Kingdom, though some seizures of small quantities of both raw and prepared opium had been made from Chinese seamen coming into British ports. During the war however, seizures had involved considerably larger quantities and it had been recognized that a regular traffic existed. Unfortunately, the Customs authorities had been considerably hampered by their reduced numbers and the many inexperienced men who had been brought in to replace others drafted to more urgent work. Moreover, at the outset the authorities had been primarily concerned with incoming rather than outgoing traffic. Further measures had,  
/however, recently



however, recently been taken to increase control and it was to be hoped that the results would soon bring about a decrease in the quantities coming into both United States and Canadian ports.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Canadian authorities fully appreciated the difficulties and the fact that during the war more attention had been paid to incoming than outgoing traffic in the United Kingdom.

He suggested however, that a more strict control might perhaps be exercised on outgoing traffic from India.

Dr. SZE, Rapporteur (CHINA), referring to the references to the part played by Chinese seamen in the illicit traffic, suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the educational aspect of the problem. Additional recreational facilities for crews in port might bring favourable results. In that connection, he welcomed the improved facilities which had lately been established by many maritime nations as a result of the agreements concluded between the Chinese Government and the British, Netherlands and Norwegian Governments regarding the welfare of Chinese seamen.

As regards the legal aspect, he felt that the varying and often too light sentences imposed on conviction were conducive to an increase in the number of offenders. The Chinese Government considered that greater uniformity should be introduced, with a view to the establishment, at some later date, of an international code to cover narcotic offences. He therefore suggested that the Secretariat might be instructed to make a study of the legal aspect, which might be used as a basis for discussion by the Commission at its next session.

Mr. GREENFIELD (INDIA) referred to the great difficulties in the way of a solution of the problem of illicit traffic in India, in view of the geographical division between British India and the Indian States, and the added possibility of smuggling from all limitrophe countries.

Control over the movement of opium in British India had been very close, with the result that consumption was now limited to the personal needs of consumers. It had in fact been reduced from an average per capita consumption  
/of 1.1 gr.



of 1.1 gr. in 1925, to .55 gr. at the present time, i.e. less than the average rate of consumption recognized as reasonable by the League of Nations, and less than the average rate of consumption in the United States of America.

That gratifying result had been made possible owing to the integrated civil administration possessed by British India. The Indian States, however, had separate and varying administrations, which considerably reduced the chances of preventing smuggling.

Fortunately the position of countries outside India was largely secured by the fact that British India bestrode the routes of transmission from the Indian States to the outer world. The successful work of the British Indian authorities was alluded to in document C.175.M.104 1939.XI.(O.C.1775(1)) issued by the League of Nations, on page 2 of which it was pointed out that extremely little Indian hemp had been found in the illicit traffic up to 1939.

An entirely new situation had, however, been brought about by the war, involving a considerable increase in the illicit traffic.

Prior to the last war the traffic had been constrained in comparatively narrow channels. The movement of illicit opium from India between the two World Wars had been mainly from Calcutta towards the Far East, though there had been some traffic from the French possession of Karikal to Ceylon, and thence to the Pacific Coast. A constant watch had been kept on that traffic and most of the traffickers had become known to the Customs officials; hiding-places had been periodically searched and the amount of opium leaking into the illicit market had been small.

With the outbreak of war and the consequent closing of sea lanes, the illicit traffic had still further diminished, and had even ceased for a time with the entry of Japan into the war. Later, however, ships and crews which had been engaged in Far Eastern trade and had taken to the illicit traffic, were transferred to Western ocean trade. The world shortage of shipping

/necessitated



necessitated the rapid turn-around of ships in ports and the authorities were requested to reduce the number of controls. The Customs administration was greatly depleted and experienced officers were transferred to more important wartime work. In addition, many of the cargoes coming into Indian ports were of a purely military nature and civilian authorities were excluded from parts of the dock areas. The changed sea routes brought the ships engaged in illicit traffic closer to the opium producing area in India. Much of the traffic was carried in military vehicles which could not be subjected to search by the civilian authorities.

Smugglers were quick to take advantage of the new conditions.

In addition, opium was more readily accessible, since production had had to be increased to provide morphine preparations for hospitals, and new cultivators had thus to be licensed, who were more apt to divert part of their produce to the illicit market.

Mr. GREENFIELD pointed out that since the termination of hostilities conditions had, however, been considerably improved by the tightening of control measures, as would be seen from page 53 of document E/C.S.7/8. In addition, the authorities in British India were in constant communication with the rulers of the Indian States in an attempt to link up the different administrations where possible. They also hoped to establish a special body to deal with production and distribution and the prevention of smuggling. War conditions had largely disappeared and civilian control could once more be exercised.

The change had already been reflected in the large increase of seizures, and further improvement was to be anticipated.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking in his capacity as representative for Canada, reverted to the remarks of the representative for China. He considered that the imposition of a fine was in itself unlikely to serve as an effective deterrent, since the smuggler's profit was considerable and he was often not apprehended. The Canadian authorities imposed a minimum sentence of six

/months



months imprisonment and a minimum fine of \$200. on conviction, rising to a maximum of seven years imprisonment with a fine of \$1,000. Aliens were deported on completion of their sentence.

The value of prison sentences as a deterrent had also been stressed in Article 2 of the 1936 Convention.

While agreeing with the remarks of the representative of China regarding the recreational facilities for crews, the Chairman added that the Canadian authorities had also had to encourage shipping companies to adopt more effective measures to reduce the possibility of smuggling. As a result, at least one large company had trained its own detectives and assigned them to each of its ships. Despite the expense involved, the company had decided to continue the system, which had produced very effective results.

#### China

Referring to the remark on page 4 of document E/C.S.7/10, to the effect that the Chinese authorities had not submitted annual reports subsequent to 1941, Mr. SZE pointed out that the Government had, in fact submitted a report to the League of Nations in 1942, which had not been published, but which would perhaps now be issued by the United Nations.

The Chinese Government regretted the lack of subsequent information which was due mainly to Japanese occupation of a part of Chinese territory and to military operations.

It had lately, however, been possible to gather together a certain amount of information covering the years 1943 to 1945. That information had recently been brought to New York by Mr. Liu but had not yet been translated from the Chinese. Since it might not be available in time for detailed discussion by the Commission at its present session, Dr. SZE suggested that the Secretariat should decide on the best method of utilizing it.

In conclusion, Dr. SZE assured the members that the Chinese Government

/was anxious



was anxious to resume, in as complete a form as possible, the publication of reports, which had been interrupted by the war.

Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, Turkey

Major COLES (UNITED KINGDOM) told the members of the Commission of the fears entertained by the British authorities that amongst the large number of military personnel in Egypt, many might be tempted to engage in illicit traffic. In fact, however, between 1941 and 1945, only fourteen cases, involving eighteen enlisted soldiers, had been reported.

Mr. ANSLINGER (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) informed the Commission that, since document E/C.S.7/10 had been prepared, additional information had been received regarding seizures by the Palestine police amounting to:

1,605 kgs. in 1941  
519 kgs. in 1942  
286 kgs. in 1943  
691 kgs. in 1944  
and 3,249 kgs. in 1945,

making a total of 6,350 kgs. for the five years, a figure second only to that reported for India. According to the information available, the seizures were reported to be of Turkish origin and were destined for Egypt.

Mr. ZAKI (EGYPT) recalled that the cultivation of opium in Egypt had been prohibited by law since 1925. Moreover the Egyptian authorities were making every effort to prevent supplies from being smuggled into the country. The supplies which did succeed in entering came largely from Palestine, whose borders with Egypt were long and difficult to keep under constant watch.

The CHAIRMAN noted that, in addition to the total given by the United States representative, the Egyptian Government had reported seizures to the amount of 5,225 kgs. between 1940 and 1943. The volume of traffic must therefore be of considerable proportions. If seizures reported in Syria and the Lebanon were added the total was almost 15,000 kgs.

Mr. BELBEZ (TURKEY) regretted that he could not give the Commission detailed information regarding seizures in Turkey, until he had received

/a report



a report which he was awaiting. He assured the Commission however, that the Turkish authorities were doing all in their power to improve control, despite the considerable difficulty of surveillance of the Syrian border.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Turkish representative might transmit to his Government the report of the Commission's discussion, and express the hope that even greater efforts might be made to control the traffic which had reached such considerable proportions.

Mr. ZAKI (EGYPT) said that he understood that Syria and the Lebanon were willing to adhere to any Conventions regarding the prohibition of the cultivation and production of narcotics. The illicit traffic in Palestine might thus be reduced.

Upon the request of Dr. SZE, Rapporteur (CHINA) to be informed of the status of Syria and the Lebanon in regard to existing Conventions, Mr. STEINIG said that the Narcotics Division had come to the conclusion, after consultation with the Legal Department, that those countries were bound by the Conventions of 1912, 1925, 1931 and 1936 in view of the ratification of those Conventions by France.

Mr. ZAKI (EGYPT) agreed, but explained that Syria and the Lebanon wished to reaffirm their adhesion to existing Conventions, in view of their recently acquired independence.

#### Thailand

There were no observations on this section of the report.

#### France

Mr. BOURGOIS (FRANCE) said that since document E/C.S.7/10 had been issued, the French Government had submitted reports covering the years 1941, 1942 and 1945. The last of those reports contained an analysis of a decree recently issued by the Government regarding medical prescriptions containing narcotics. The French authorities had discovered that a large number of cases of illicit traffic came from false medical prescriptions

/ procured by



procured by addicts. They had therefore laid it down that prescriptions containing narcotic drugs would be drawn up on special forms issued by the Ministry of Health, and to be completed in duplicate by the doctor or dentist concerned who must note the name of the patient. Additional provisions concerned the repeating of prescriptions which was forbidden except in certain specified cases, the fixing of quantities of drugs to be made available to practitioners in urgent cases, and the transfer of functions previously performed by the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Population.

The representative for France added that arrests in 1945 had risen to 311, from 233 in 1944. Except for one case of international traffic between the United States and France, it could be said that prepared drugs such as heroin and cocaine had almost disappeared from the illicit market as a result of the war. Practically no opium-smoking dens remained.

The discussion was adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1:00 p.m.