

**ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL**

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E/C.S.7/44

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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

SUMMARY RECORD OF THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, Thursday, 5 December 1946
at 10:30 a.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Col. C.E.L. Shannon	(Canada)
Vice-Chairman:	Dr. S. Tubiasz	(Poland)
Rapporteur:	Dr. Szeming Sze	(China)
	Mr. M.A. Zaki	(Egypt)
	Mr. G. Bourgois	(France)
	Mr. H. Greenfield	(India)
	Mr. A.G. Farsky	(Iran)
	Dr. J. Quevedo Bazon	(Mexico)
	Dr. J.A. Lazarte	(Peru)
	Mr. F. Beltez	(Turkey)
	Major W.H. Coles	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. J. Anslinger	(United States of America)
	Mr. V. Zuev	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
	Mr. S. Krasovec	(Yugoslavia)
	Mr. May	(President of the Permanent Central Opium Board, Member of the Supervisory Body.)
Secretariat:	Mr. L. Steinig	(Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs.)
	Mr. V. Pastuhov	(Secretary of the Commission)

1. Drug Addiction: (Document E/C.S.7/26)

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission was now going to deal with marihuana, the discussion on which had been postponed at the suggestion of the representative of Mexico.

Dr. Quevedo BAZAN (MEXICO) said the marihuana problem in Mexico had two aspects, medical and legal. To take the legal aspect, Mexican law

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prohibited absolutely the cultivation of, dealings in, and the use of marihuana in any form. Medical use of this plant was also forbidden and no prescription containing marihuana could be made out.

From the medical point of view the problem was complicated, since the use of this drug was very widespread amongst the lower classes. Furthermore, a number of medical and scientific bodies had studied the influence of marihuana on the individual, and their findings differed completely from those reached by the American authors in the pamphlets referred to by the United States representative. Mexican doctors had concluded that the marihuana habit was easily overcome, and had no pathological after-effects. As regards the direct connection between marihuana and crime, it had been found in Mexico that in every case crimes ascribed to marihuana were attributable to causes already existing prior to use of the drug. The criminals had been psychologically abnormal persons. In spite of these statements by Mexican scientific authorities, the Government was utterly opposed to the cultivation, production and use of marihuana, and it had been noted that the greatest number of convictions had been for offences arising out of the traffic in this drug.

Mr. ANSLINGER (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) acknowledged that certain studies in the United States had led to the same conclusions as those arrived at by the Mexican doctors. In New York a Mayor's Committee had made some studies at the Welfare Island penitentiary and others had been carried out at the Lexington Institution, Kentucky. But all the studies related to prisoners or inmates and, as Professor Bouquet had pointed out, no definite conclusion could be drawn from them regarding the attitude addicts in normal society would have adopted. After quoting several examples of the harmful effects of marihuana, he emphasized that the Mayor's Committee's report, with
/its finding

its finding that this drug was harmless, constituted a real danger. For example, a young hotel waiter, immediately after smoking his first marihuana cigarette, had behaved like a madman and finished up by shooting dead with a revolver a guard of a federal building in Oklahoma. American authorities and doctors had, moreover, noted many cases where the use of marihuana had led to crime. Their conclusions usually showed that in most cases marihuana had dangerous effects: the addict lost his balance, suffered from hallucinations, behaved in a hostile manner towards his fellow men, particularly towards authority, and was always aggressive. In the end he almost invariably became a complete degenerate.

Mr. GREENFIELD (INDIA) said that he could not give any final verdict on the effects of the drug on individuals, because Indians were fairly moderate in their use of ganja and bhang and usually preferred opium. The other two drugs were used principally on the occasion of festivals or religious ceremonies. In such circumstances their use was not very dangerous and, on the whole, might be said merely to intensify the individual's normal inclinations. If he had propensities to crime the chances were that he would commit one; if he were inclined to religious contemplation he would become even more religious; and finally, if he were of a placid disposition he would become drowsy. All the experiments carried out in India had led to the conclusion that moderate consumption produced no harmful effects. On the other hand, excessive indulgence weakened the constitution and might produce madness and moral degeneration. From the social point of view the addict, even if he indulged excessively in the drug, remained inoffensive, at least in India. According to Colonel Chopra, the drug, like most narcotics, produced temporary disorders which later disappeared without any trace. Nerve cases were more apt to use narcotic drugs than normal persons.

/In India

In India most addicts were either beggars or "saints", individuals inclined to religious contemplation who tended to become even more religious under the influence of the drug, and were no problem for the authorities. In other cases use of the drug produced timidity rather than violence and hallucinations, usually of a sexual nature.

But in spite of the fact that the results of the use of the drug in his country gave little cause for anxiety, he had no doubts as to the necessity of maintaining strict control.

Dr. ISMAIL (EGYPT) reminded them that in his country marihuana cannabis was called hashish. The Egyptians used it in moderation, and it was less dangerous than other narcotic drugs. Its excessive use might, however, have a bad affect on the health of addicts, even to the extent of inciting them to crime. Hashish had long been prohibited in Egypt and, by a ministerial decree of 6 February 1935, the Ministry of Public Health had limited the quantities authorized for medical use: no prescription could contain more than 0.4 grains of cannabis or four grains of extract of cannabis, or twenty-five tablets.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Canada, emphasized that marihuana was not a serious problem in his country. Since 1932, the Government had been active in ensuring that there was no deterioration in the situation. Indian hemp was, however, known in Canada, where certain farmers cultivated it quite innocently for use as protection against the wind. Various monasteries had planted whole garden borders with hemp, but had hurriedly destroyed them when they learned what a scourge it was. Thus, the danger might become serious at any moment, and Canada had always taken the necessary strict precautionary measures.

Dr. LAZARTE (PERU) stated that in his country the problem of marihuana was unknown, as the drug was prohibited by law, and its cultivation almost negligible. As a doctor, he fully agreed with what had been said about the effects of the drug. In his view, the effect

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of any drug depended on the tendencies and personality of the taker. The quantity taken was also important, and ordinary stimulants might become dangerous if the dose was increased. Again continuity of use was also a major factor: the body increased its resistance to the drug, so that the dose had to be augmented in order to obtain the same results, and that gave rise to a toxic condition, the effects of which differed according to whether it was acute or chronic. Finally, the nature of the drug was a factor of equal importance, since it might differ according to whether the plant was grown in Mexico or in India: for instance, in Mexico there were no recorded instances of illusion or hallucination as found in India.

Nevertheless from the legal point of view, marihuana was a danger to society. It released latent impulses and it was impossible to foresee the social consequences of such a characteristic. That fact alone was sufficient justification for prohibiting this drug.

Mr. ANSLINGER (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) spoke again to announce that the United States Congress had sent him for his opinion the draft of a law proposed by the Association of American Shipowners: its object was to forbid sailors to bring marihuana board any United States vessel because of the quarrels, riots and mutinies that this drug had already provoked. This law had been passed by Congress.

Mr. MAY (PRESIDENT OF THE PERMANENT CENTRAL OPIUM BOARD) felt that marihuana was also an international problem: if a sub-committee were appointed to study it, it should examine the possibility of placing marihuana under international control. He observed that the extracts and tinctures of cannabis were already under international control.

DECISION: Document E/C.S.7/26 regarding drug addiction was approved.

2. Appointment of Sub-Commissions (Document E/C.S.7/20)

The CHAIRMAN reviewed the various meetings of the sub-commissions

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