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Item 14 of the Provisional Agenda

INDIAN HEMP

Memorandum of the Assistant Secretary-General
in Charge of Social Affairs

The Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Social Affairs has the honour to submit the present memorandum to the members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with a view to facilitating the Commission's work on Item 14 of the Provisional Agenda.

/INDIAN HEMP

INDIAN HEMP

I. THE VARIOUS USES OF HEMP (CANNABIS SATIVA L.)

No complete statistics are at present available on the area cultivated with indian hemp or the production and use of that plant. Moreover, it is difficult to compile statistics in view of the fact that the cultivated areas are frequently distant and of difficult access. The League of Nations published statistics showing that there was a very considerable licit commercial traffic in indian hemp, its resin and preparations in the years 1934, 1935, 1936 and 1937 (documents C. 449. M. 265 1936. XI, C. 353 M. 240. 1937. XI, C. 482. M. 325. 1938. XI).

Indian hemp has various commercial uses. The fibre extracted from the stalks is used as a textile. It is tough but difficult to bleach, and is used in the manufacture of cord, rope, carpet warps, sails, canvas, etc. The plant is cultivated for its fibre in many countries, and amongst those which both export the fibre and use it for domestic consumption may be mentioned Russia, Italy, Hungary, Roumania, Yugoslavia, Chile, China and Japan. Several other countries produce the fibre for domestic consumption.

The seeds or fruits (achenes) contain from twenty to thirty per cent of oil, which is used industrially for the manufacture of paint, varnish and soap. Russia and China (particularly Manchuria) are large producers of hemp seed. The seed is used as bird food and occasionally for human consumption. It is possible, however, that it contains a certain proportion of toxic substances.

The resin contains the active principal at present known chemically as Tetrahydrocannabinol. Both the male (staminate) and female (pistillate) plants produce the resin; but it is ordinarily obtained from the female plant after the male plant has dried. The raw substance comprises the dried tops of the plant and the resin adhering to them. In India the non-fertilized female tops are used, the male plant being destroyed before emitting its pollen; in other parts of the world the fertilized tops are used, being harvested frequently before they have gone to seed. The resin is often separated more or less completely from the follicles and peduncles, either by mechanical methods or by solution, using a solvent, which is generally alcoholic.

This substance is very little used for medicinal purposes. It is most commonly used to lessen pain, induce sleep, calm states of anxiety, produce euphoria, and to heal migraine; and it is sometimes

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applied to psychiatric experiments. The effect of this substance and its preparations is not constant. Now that the active principal can be obtained and that analogous and homologous drugs may be manufactured synthetically, it may be that substances of this type will be used more frequently for therapeutic purposes.

Hemp is used as a narcotic both legally and illegally in India, Nepao, Sinkiang, Iran, Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco; by the indigenous populations of other parts of Africa; in the Antilles, Brazil, Mexico and other Latin American countries.

The resin may be smoked, eaten or drunk. Ordinarily it is smoked, either alone or mixed with tobacco. In America, the dried tops of the plant are smoked, and in Egypt and Iran, stronger preparations are commonly used. Charas or raw resin is also smoked. In addition, various types of sweets, which are then eaten, may be made from raw resin; and the resin is also used in melted butter. A beverage made of powdered resin mixed with water or some form of alcohol may also be drunk.

The principal preparations in use are:

Analogine, powder, elixir and tablets; Bromidia and Bromidis (made from Indian hemp extract); Calicida "Lil"; Cannabis Indica Pills; Cannabisol (Leo) (solution and tablets); Cannatropin (Leo) (solution); Cannual, Tablettae (Leo); Capsules Codeinae c. ext. Cannabis Indica (made from Indian hemp extract); Chlorodyne; Chloroform and Cannabis Indica Comp. N.F., Mixt.; Compound Mixture of Chloral Potassium Bromide N.F. (a preparation of Indian hemp extract); Compound Mixture of Chloroform and Morph. N.F. (Preparation of Indian hemp extract); Damiani Compound Tablets; Elixir Bromide and Chloral Compound; Fluid extract of Indian hemp; Grimault's Asthma cure (made from Indian hemp extract or tincture); Indian tincture (made from Indian hemp tincture); Indonal-Burgi-Tablets; Linseed, Liquorice and Chlorodine Lozenges; Liq. Bromide-chloral Co. B.P.C. 1901 (made from Indian hemp extract or tincture); Neo-Kawasol (pills); Pillula Extr. Cannabis Ind. (Cannabis pills); Sedative powder and elixir (made from Indian hemp extract or tincture); Tablettae (made from Indian hemp extract or tincture). (League of Nations documents C.3 118.M. 263. 1939. XI).

II. INTERNATIONAL REGULATION OF INDIAN HEMP

The League of Nations Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium began to concern itself with the Indian hemp problem in 1923. Till that date Indian hemp had not been covered by any international agreement, since it is not mentioned in the Hague Convention or in the final
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Protocol of the International Opium Convention signed at The Hague on 28 January 1912 (the Convention is dated 24 January 1912). The Protocol records the fact that "Furthermore, the Conference uttered the following wishes:

".....

"II. The Conference is of the opinion that it is advisable to study the question of Indian hemp from the statistical and scientific standpoint, with a view to regulating its misuse, should the necessity therefor make itself felt, by domestic legislation or by an international agreement".

On 8 November 1923, the Government of the Union of South Africa proposed in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations that Indian hemp should be included in the list of narcotic drugs (Document O.C. 163).

On 12 August 1924, the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium, pursuant to that letter, and at the proposal of Great Britain, submitted to the Council a resolution asking that Governments should be invited to furnish to the League any information on Indian hemp in their possession (League of Nations Document A.32.1924 XI).

On 29 August 1924, the Council adopted a resolution instructing the Secretary-General to request the Governments of the States Members of the League and parties to The Hague Convention to furnish the Secretariat with information on the production, use of and traffic in Indian hemp in their territories (League of Nations Document A.67.1924. XI).

In accordance with that resolution a circular letter (C.L. 169) was forwarded on 17 November 1924 to all Governments. Twenty-six countries replied (League of Nations Document O.C. 291).

Although the question was not included in the agenda of the Second Opium Conference (17 November 1924 - 19 February 1925), the Conference instructed Sub-Committee "F" to study the Indian hemp problem (League of Nations Documents O.D.C. 118 and O.D.C. 72).

The Sub-Committee's report showed that the substance was essentially dangerous and that it should be made subject to organized control as a narcotic, without, however, disregarding the fact that the plant was also cultivated as a textile and as a source of oils, and that it frequently existed in territories where administrative organization was of too rudimentary and insufficient character to permit the enforcement of regulations.

The Conference decided to include the following stipulations on Indian hemp in the 1925 Convention:

/1. Article

1. Article 1 contains the following definition:

"Indian hemp means the dried flowering or fruiting tops of the pistillate plant Cannabis sativa L. from which the resin has not been extracted, under whatever name they may be designated in commerce".

2. The manufacture, import, sale, distribution, export and use of the Galenical preparations of Indian hemp are restricted to medical and scientific use and, in general, made subject to the provisions of Chapter III, Articles 5, 6, 7, 8.

3. International commerce in Indian hemp (the plant, Galenical preparations, resin and normal resin-based preparations) is made subject to the import and export certificates system laid down in Chapter V.

4. In addition, the export of Indian hemp, resin and resin-based preparations is made subject to special regulations (Chapter IV, Article 11):

"1. In addition to the provisions of Chapter V of the present Convention which shall apply to Indian hemp and the resin prepared from it, the Contracting Parties undertake:

(a) To prohibit the export of the resin obtained from Indian hemp and the ordinary preparations of which the resin forms the base (as well as hashish, esrar, chiras, djamba) to countries which have prohibited their use, and, in cases where export is permitted, to require the production of a special import certificate issued by the Government of the importing country stating that the importation is approved for the purposes specified in the certificate and that the resin or preparations will not be exported;

(b) Before issuing an export authorization under Article 13 of the present convention, in respect of Indian hemp, to require the production of a special import certificate issued by the Government of the importing country and stating that the importation is approved and is required exclusively for medical or scientific purposes.

2. The contracting parties shall exercise an effective control of such a nature as to prevent illicit international traffic in Indian hemp and especially in the resin."

/5. The Contracting

5. The Contracting Parties agree to send to the Permanent Central Board the statistics of the stalks of galenical preparations of Indian hemp (Article 22, paragraph 1 (c)), consumption (Article 22, paragraph 1 (d)), imports, exports (Article 22, paragraph 2) and the amounts required in the country for general medical and scientific purposes (Article 22, paragraph 3).

There are however a number of deficiencies in the present system of international control:

- 1 - Article 4 of Chapter III does not apply to the galenical preparations (extract and tincture).
- 2 - Chapter IV, Article 1, referring to hemp, its resin and preparations, applies only to international trade.
- 3 - The statistics required under Article 22 do not apply to the resin or its preparations. Moreover, sub-paragraph (b) of paragraph 1 of that Article does not include the galenical preparations in the list of substances for which statistics on manufacture must be furnished.

The question of Indian hemp was again taken up at the Fourteenth Session of the Advisory Committee when the draft convention for limiting the manufacture and regulating the distribution of narcotic drugs was considered (League of Nations Document C.88.M.34.1931.XI).

At its Nineteenth Session the Advisory Committee decided to set up a Sub-Committee to invite a competent expert to deal with the questions concerning Indian hemp. This Sub-Committee, composed of the representatives of Canada, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Egypt, Spain, India, the United States, Mexico and Poland, carried on its work with Dr. J. Bouquet acting as expert (League of Nations Document C.290.M.176.1936.XI).

A number of studies on Indian hemp were then undertaken and published. A list of these is given as an annex to the present document.

At its First Session the Sub-Committee undertook a general study of the task entrusted to it by the Committee and made a number of recommendations: it would be important to work out a simple method of dosage which would enable the presence of cannabinol to be detected and would show whether the substance examined was Cannabis sativa or a derivative. The government chemists who carry on a direct exchange of unofficial police information should keep one another informed of any research they are doing in connection with the problem of Indian hemp. These

experts might also be invited to study the possibility of the simplification and unification of the nomenclature applied to substances covered by the term "Indian hemp" in the Geneva Convention of 1925, with a view to giving a single scientific and precise appellation to the substance which would be characteristic of it.

The Sub-Committee did not deal with the question of the galenical preparations of Cannabis Sativa but its attention was drawn to the fact that in respect of national control, the present international conventions establish less rigorous control over the preparations of the resin of that drug than is prescribed for other drugs. It was also pointed out that the legislation on Cannabis Sativa in its various forms goes much farther in certain countries than the conventions require. In view of recent changes in the situation regarding Cannabis Sativa, the Sub-Committee proposed to the Advisory Committee on Opium to request the Secretariat to study that question in order to find out if it would be practically possible to recommend amending or supplementing the existing conventions.

On 30 May 1936 the Committee examined the report by the Sub-Committee on Cannabis Sativa on the work of its second session (League of Nations Document O.C. 1655), and adopted the Sub-Committee's recommendations, postponing to a later date the decisions which were to be taken in this field.

The debate showed that from the medical viewpoint the use of indian hemp in its various forms was considered in certain countries as being by no means indispensable. Accordingly, the rigid restriction of the use of Cannabis Sativa and its derivatives in human, if not in veterinarian medicine, might not perhaps give rise to much objection.

Meanwhile, the Health Committee having submitted the question of the preparations having the extract or tincture of indian hemp as the base to the Permanent Committee of the Office International des Epiphytaires Publiques (Article 10 of the 1925 Convention) made a report to the Advisory Committee on this matter and in the course of its twenty-first session, the Committee, taking note of the said report, decided to apply the measures of control provided for in the 1925 Convention to these preparations having the extract or tincture of indian hemp as their base which were liable to similar abuse and productive of similar ill-effects as the extract or tincture themselves (League of Nations Document C. 290. M. 176. 1936. XI).

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In the course of the following sessions, the Advisory Committee continued to deal with the question of indian hemp and at its twenty-fourth session (1939) expressed the view, in accordance with the proposal by the representative of Mexico, that it would be advisable to pursue and intensify the research, particularly in countries where Cannabis constituted a problem (League of Nations document C. 209. M. 136. 1939. XI). This work was interrupted by the war.

In its report for 1946 (document E/GB/2 November 1947, page 26), the Permanent Central Opium Board pointed out that: "A grave difficulty in the present system of international control of narcotic drugs is that the control over indian hemp is quite inadequate. Its resin (hashish, charas, etc.) is consumed extensively in various parts of the world and has deleterious effects. The plant from which the substance is derived is widely cultivated, grows wild and is hard to control. In the opinion of the Board the situation is one which requires drastic international action. The matter should be taken in hand at the earliest possible moment."

III. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- (a) It is an established fact that indian hemp is cultivated or grows wild in various parts of the world and is consumed in one form or another in a very large number of countries.
- (b) Except for the galenical preparations, the principal alkaloid of indian hemp cannot be used as such.
- (c) Although it is defined and in part covered by the 1925 Convention, it is not strictly controlled by the international conventions on narcotic drugs.

The main difficulties in the control of the manufacture and distribution of the various products having indian hemp as the base are:

- (a) The plant grows wild or is cultivated in a large number of areas and in all parts of the world.
- (b) It is cultivated in certain countries for its fibres or oleaginous seeds.
- (c) The extraction of the resin for use in medicinal preparations or for non-medical consumption in the form of cakes, candies, cigarettes, etc., is comparatively easy and simple.

The Committee might see fit to recommend to the Secretariat to undertake such studies as would enable it to carry on its work on indian hemp and if need be to engage the services of an expert.

ANNEX

A Summary Bibliography on the Question of Indian Hemp

Indian hemp has given, and is still giving, rise to a considerable quantity of literature. A very complete nomenclature, accompanied by definitions and directions for use, is given in the Annex to the work by Robert P. Walton (J. P. Lippincott Co., 1938) entitled "Marihuana, America's New Drug Problem". In addition, the British Medical Journal in its issue of 23 January 1947 published under the name of G. Taylor Stockings an article on a new substance producing euphoria and called "Synhexyl". This drug belongs to a group of synthetic compounds which are chemically related to the derivatives of cannabis. Its chemical composition is 1-hydroxy-3-11-hexyl-6-6-9-trimethyl-7-8-8-10-tetrahydro-6-dibenzopyran. In the United States a similar product is called "Pyrahexyl" or "Parahexyl".

The following works may also be mentioned:

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| MARTI | Las Toxicomanias, Barcelona, 1943. (Drug Addiction, Barcelona, 1943.) |
| NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL | Committee on Drug Addiction, Washington, 1929-1941. |
| PALMER | Drug Addiction, New York, 1942. |
| SRECHER v. BERNEGG | Tropische u. Subtropische Weltwirtschaftspflanzen, Part ii, Vol. 1-3, Stuttgart, 1934-1936. (Tropical and sub-tropical plants of importance in world economy, Part ii, Vol. 1-3, Stuttgart, 1934-1936) |
| WOLFF, Pablo O. | Los Venenos sociales, Buenos Aires, 1943. (Social poisons, Buenos Aires, 1943). |
| SEGURA, Millan | La Marihuana, Mexico, 1939. (Marihuana, Mexico, 1939). |

The League of Nations published a number of documents on Indian hemp of which the principal ones are the following:

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| O.D.C. 72(1) | Report by Sub-Commission "F" on the problem of Indian hemp. |
| O.D.C. 118 | Report on the study of the problem of Indian hemp. |
| 8 November 1923 | Letter from the Government of the Union of South Africa to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations for the classification of Indian hemp among narcotic drugs. |
| O.C. 163 | |
| C.397.II.146.1924.II | |
| C.I. 169 | A circular letter to all the Governments (requesting information on Indian hemp). |

- O.D.C. 38
Second Opium Conf. A memorandum of hashish presented by the chief delegate of Egypt (hashish, its cultivation, preparation, use, effects and measures of control).
- O.D.C. 45 A proposition by Egypt for the inclusion of hashish among narcotic drugs.
- O.D.C. 55 A memorandum on hashish in Egypt. Its composition, etc. Egyptian Laws.
- O.C. 1542 (a) The situation with regard to Indian hemp.
- O.C. 1542 (b) The situation with regard to Indian hemp. New decrees.
- O.C. 1542 (c) The situation with regard to Indian hemp. Note on the remarks and information submitted by the Governments.
- O.C. 1542 (g) and
O.C. 1542 (l) Extract from the letter of Dr. Bouquet and Mr. Myttersere. A study on marihuana intoxication (presented by the representative of Mexico).
- O.C. 1542 (f) and addendum
O.C. 1542 (h) Remarks on the situation of the legislation in the Belgian Congo.
Determination of Physiological activity of Hemp resin by a polarimetric method, by M. H. Ghose (communicated U. K.)
- O.C. 1542 (i) Law concerning the control of Indian Hemp in Siam.
- O.C. 1542 (e) A special report from the Government of Jamaica on "on the smoking of Gauja".
- O.C. 1542 (k) Situation as regards the control of Cannabis (Hemp) and Drugs derived from Cannabis.
- O.C. 1542 (m) The second note on Indian Hemp by Dr. F. Myttersere.
- O.C. 1542 (n) Situation concerning the control of Cannabis (hemp) and of drugs derived. Note communicated by the Government of U.S.A.
- O.C. 1542 (o) A simple method of dosage by J. Bouquet.
- O.C. 1542 (p) A way of detecting the presence of Cannabis Sativa, by J. C. Munch, etc.
- O.C. 1542 (j) Cannabis - Questionnaire prepared for the use of the experts who have been invited by the Advisory Committee to collaborate on this subject.
- O.C. 1542 Preliminary Note on the chief aspects of the problem of Indian Hemp and the laws relating thereto in force in certain countries.

- O.C. 1542 (q) Excerpts from a report prepared in the U.S. Treasury Dept. concerning Cannabis, etc.
- O.C. 1542 (r) Memorandum from Dr. W. L. Treadway, Assistant Surgeon General (U.S.A.) in dealing with Cannabis.
- O.C. 1542 (s) Memorandum describing a simple test for determining the presence of marihuana in cigarettes, by U.S.A. Treasury Dept.
- O.C. 1542 (t) Third note on Indian Hemp by Dr. F. Myttenaere.
(a) bibliography, (b) personal works.
- O.C. 1542 (v) Remarks on Document 1542 (s) by Dr. J. Bouquet.
- O.C. 1542 (x) Study of chemical identifications of marihuana by Dr. R. Plasencia (Comm. by Government of Cuba).
- O.C. 1542 (y) Situation concerning the control of Cannabis and drugs prepared from Cannabis. Law on the taxation of Marihuana in the U.S.A.
- O.C. 1542 (w) Situation concerning the control of Cannabis and drugs prepared from Cannabis. Law on the taxation of Marihuana in the U.S.A.
- O.C. 1542 (z) Further information regarding experiments on the chemical identification of Marihuana. Note of U.S. Treasury Dept.
- O.C. 1724 Sub-Committee on Cannabis. Report presented by Dr. J. Bouquet.
- O.C. 1724 (a) Fourth note on Indian Hemp by Dr. F. Myttenaere.
- O.C. 1729 Fines and imprisonment in the case of violation against the Federal law on narcotic drugs (Note from the U.S.A.).
- O.C. 1731 Marihuana, depraver of the youth, (Note presented by the U.S.A.).
- O.C. 1733 Marihuana, the new dangerous drug, by F. T. Merrill (transmitted by the U.S.A.).
- O.C. 1734 Application of the laws on narcotic drugs in the U.S.A. Article by H.S. Anslinger.
- O.C./Cannabis 1. On the identification of Marihuana. A treatise presented by the Treasury Department of the U.S.A.
- O.C./Cannabis 2. Method of identifying cannabis. Note of Pugeault and Hassan.
- O.C./Cannabis 3. Present state of documentation concerning Cannabis and the problems to which it gives rise, by Dr. J. Bouquet.

- O.C./Cannabis 4. Enquiry regarding the determination of the resin content of Indian Hemp grown in different countries. Note of the Director of the Opium Traffic Section.
- O.C./Cannabis 5. A revue of the progress accomplished in the researches on marihuana during 1938. Transmitted by the representative of the U.S.A.
- O.C./Cannabis 6. The fifth note on Cannabis, by Dr. F. Myttenaere.
- O.C./Cannabis 7. Present position in regard to Cannabis. Results obtained and problems to be solved. Note by Director of Opium Traffic Section.
- O.C./Cannabis 8. Cannabis addiction in Turkey. Physiological and psychological effects of intoxication, by Prof. Mazhar Osman Usman.
- O.C./Cannabis 9. The active principles of Cannabis Indica Resin I. by Thomas Spence Work, etc.
- O.C./Cannabis 10. Aberrant variety of Cannabis (second year of cultivation) see Document 1724, ch. iv.
- O.C./Cannabis 12. Cannabis addiction in Algeria, considered in its relationship to mental pathology and criminology, by Prof. Penot.
- O.C./Cannabis 13. Sixth note on Cannabis, by Dr. F. Myttenaere.
- O.C./Cannabis 14. The alleged intoxicating power of Cannabis seed, by Dr. J. Bouquet.

The representative of the United States to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs sent to the Secretariat the following bibliography on synthetic compounds having properties similar to those of Indian Hemp:

(Titles 1 to 35 in English to be included in the final copy).

Synhexyl, pyrahexyl, and parahexyl apparently all refer to the same compound. However, there are any number of homologs and analogs that may have somewhat similar action.
