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Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Seventh session
Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda

THE REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY
ON THE COCA LEAF

Communications from the Governments of Bolivia and Peru

1. Note by the Secretary-General: By resolution 395 D (XIII) of 9 August 1951 the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, of the opinion expressed thereon by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs during its fifth session, and of the Commission of Enquiry's additional observations on the opinions expressed on the report by the representatives of Bolivia and Peru during that session; it also decided to forward the report and the said additional observations of the Commission of Enquiry to the Governments of Bolivia and Peru, with the request for the communication of their observations thereon to the Secretary-General.
2. The Secretary-General has the honour to reproduce below the texts of communications relating to the Commission of Enquiry's report which he has received from the Governments of Bolivia and Peru.

Communication dated 3 December 1951 from the Permanent Representative of Bolivia to the United Nations

"The Permanent Delegate of Bolivia to the United Nations ... has the honour to inform ... [the Secretary-General] that the opinion of the Bolivian Government regarding the enquiry into the chewing of the coca leaf is as follows:

"(1) In accordance with the agreement between the Bolivian Government and the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf neither conclusions nor recommendations emanating from the study into the chewing of coca should be formulated until each country concerned has completed its own studies on the matter and considered them as conclusive and definitive.

"(2) The Bolivian Government considers that an adequate extension of the time limit would be advisable and therefore requests that such extension should be granted to enable it to continue and complete the studies now receiving its attention.

"(3) The Bolivian Government considers that it is advisable to continue the study on coca in Bolivia and, in order that this study should be as thorough and accurate as possible, it requests the United Nations to provide technical assistance and the necessary research material under conditions similar to those governing the co-operation of the United Nations with the Peruvian Republic for the same purpose."

COUNTER-REPLY OF THE PERUVIAN COCA LEAF COMMISSION TO THE UNITED
NATIONS' COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE COCA LEAF

The Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission wishes first of all, to express its satisfaction that the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf has agreed that, before a final decision is taken, a serious experiment should be carried out in Peru within a reasonable period of time, and with the necessary guarantees of scientific accuracy. Indeed, in the Peruvian Commission's view, such a step is essential to prevent the adoption of premature solutions not borne out or supported by careful and painstaking scientific research.

The Peruvian Commission also wishes it to be clearly understood that all the information supplied and the opinions expressed by its Chairman, Dr. Carlos Monge M., both in his reports and in the speeches made in his capacity, as Peruvian representative to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, represent the views of the Peruvian Commission, which was appointed by its Government to deal with this subject. It is therefore quite wrong to ascribe to Dr. Monge personally opinions which are really those of the Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission as a whole.^{1/}

The reply of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf to the opinions expressed by the Peruvian delegation in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Economic and Social Council may be divided into two parts:

1. A polemical part, to which the Peruvian Government will reply exclusively on the basis of bibliographic quotations, and documents and proved statements of indisputable worth and will refrain from citing biased and baseless comments and assertions of the kind to which the United Nations Commission of Enquiry has had such frequent recourse in refuting the opinions of the Peruvian delegation.

^{1/} The Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission is composed of: C. Monge, Director of the National Institute of Andean Biology; F. Carranza, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy; A. León, Director of the National School of Agriculture; E. Encinas, Professor of Psychiatry; J. Monge, Professor of Economics; A. Guzman-Barrón, Professor of Biochemistry; M. Sanchez-Palacios, Professor of rural, hydraulic, and Industrial Law and Civil Procedural; J. E. Castañeda, Professor of Civil Law; J. H. Aste-Salazar, Professor of Physiopathology; C. Avalos, Chief of the Narcotics Department of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. /2. A

2. A part containing constructive conclusions, in which the United Nations Commission of Enquiry proposes a social and nutritional experiment as a first step, the final solution to be postponed pending the results of that experiment.

Desirous of proceeding in an orderly fashion, the Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission will in its counter-reply answer the remarks of the members of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf one by one.

I. POLEMICAL PART

1. The members of the United Nations Commission assert that there is a contradiction per se in the fact that "the representative of Peru congratulated the Commission of Enquiry on its remarkable work on the administrative, economic and social aspects of the problem, but expressed disagreement with the medical considerations included in the report". (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1 - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 2). In fact, there is no contradiction, since the Peruvian representative referred exclusively to "the work of the Commission of Enquiry in collecting statistical, demographic and administrative data relating to the cultivation and use of the coca leaf. On the other hand, he could not support the conclusions which the Commission of Enquiry had seen fit to reach with regard to the medical aspects of chewing the coca leaf." (E/CN.7/SR.118, page 11).^{1/}

The relevant paragraph in English, in particular the word "collecting", clearly expresses the Peruvian representative's thought which, for understandable reasons, is distorted in the reply of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry.

2. The Peruvian Commission does not regard it as a "curious situation" that Professor Dr. Carlos Monge, whose views on coca are known, should be the representative of Peru on the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. "It is, of course, a curious situation that the representative of Peru on the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Professor Dr. Carlos Monge, is the same person whose views on the necessity and importance of coca chewing for the indigenous population of the High Andes had to be specially discussed in the medical part of our report." (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1 - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 2).

Leaving aside the reference to "the necessity and importance of coca chewing for the indigenous population" - a remark which is not to be found in any of Professor Monge's publications - the Peruvian Commission wishes to

^{1/} Note by the Secretary-General: The references are to the Provisional Summary Records.

explain that the Peruvian Government founded the National Institute of Andean Biology in 1940 at Professor Monge's request, in order to study, inter alia the problem of coca.^{1/} It is consequently logical and not curious that the Director of this Institute should be the representative of Peru stating his Government's views.

3. The Commission of Enquiry lays particular emphasis on Dr. Monge's statement that there were not two schools of thought in Peru on the coca problem, and that his opinion was shared by the entire Faculty of Medicine. In reality, there is an error in the summary record on this point. What the representative of Peru stated and the Peruvian delegation firmly maintains is that as far as the Peruvian Government is concerned, there are not two opinions but only one valid opinion, which is that expressed by the Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission and the Peruvian delegation in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Consequently, to speak of two opinions means to question the position of the Peruvian Government, which is neither logical nor fitting.^{2/}

4. The United Nations Commission of Enquiry states that a Peruvian author "has proved in a large number of publications, all quoted in our report, that Monge's opinions on coca are not acceptable", (the reference is to Dr. Monge's alleged statement that the chewing of coca leaf is beneficial), and adds, quoting from an obituary which appeared in "El Comercio" that "the...opinion of this man was finally confirmed through the United Nations Commission's report". Similarly it refers to the opinion of Dr. Humberto Aste-Salazar, who is presumed to belong to "the school of Professor Monge"

(E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1 - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 3).

1/ The relevant passage of the Supreme Decree of 30 January 1940 establishing the National Institute of Andean Biology reads as follows: "That it is necessary for the health policies of the Government to study the influence of altitude on diseases connected with industrial work and the coca leaf habit."

2/ There are other errors in the summary record. For example, it says: "Nevertheless, two million human beings of that type had inhabited the high plain region since the remotest times" (E/CN.7/SR.118, page 11), whereas those inhabitants number at least thirty or forty million. Another mistake is the reference to "the experiments of Dr. Hopkins" (E/CN.7/SR.118, page 13); the Peruvian delegation spoke of the experiments carried out by Dr. C. Eyzaguirre, in the School of Medicine of Johns Hopkins University, of which no mention is made in the summary record.

It is difficult to understand how such incorrect assertions can be made. Neither Dr. Monge nor Dr. Aste-Salazar has ever maintained that the chewing of coca leaf is necessary or beneficial. It has always been Professor Monge's contention that, in the face of divergent opinions on the habit of coca leaf chewing, it is essential to investigate the problem scientifically in order to avoid premature conclusions. The Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission wishes to state that Dr. Monge has not affirmed in any of his publications that coca leaf is necessary and that any person or body which says the contrary is guilty of a falsehood.

As regards the assertion that Dr. Aste-Salazar belongs to the "school of Dr. Monge," the Peruvian Commission wishes it to be understood that Dr. Aste-Salazar's research was carried out entirely independently of Dr. Monge; that thanks to the good offices of Dr. Alberto Hurtado, Professor and Director of the Physiopathological Laboratories of the Faculty of Medicine, and to the assistance of the Public Health Institutes of the United States, Dr. Aste-Salazar was able to go to that country to investigate, study and invent techniques for estimating cocaine in the blood, tissues, etc. etc. The Peruvian Commission greatly appreciates the collaboration of Dr. Aste-Salazar, one of its members, both because of his exceptionally fine qualifications and because of his work, on the value of which the United Nations Commission of Enquiry cast doubt by saying in its first report: "If Aste-Salazar is right, the problem of coca leaf chewing is reduced to negligible proportions" (Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, May 1950, page 22). The Peruvian Commission believes that Dr. Aste-Salazar is right.

5. The United Nations Commission of Enquiry says that "it is misleading to mix up the importance of high altitude physiology with the problem of coca chewing". (E/6666/Add.1/Rev.1 - E/CN.7/AD.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 4). The Commission of Enquiry adds: "High altitude physiology has been studied in Switzerland and other countries as well for more than 50 years" (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1 - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 4).

This is an entirely erroneous way of looking at the problem. The studies made in Switzerland applied to the sufferings of human beings who lived for a few days at the altitude of the Jungfraujoeh. Peru, on the other hand, has studied the normal condition of people who have lived since pre-historic times

/at altitudes

at altitudes much higher than those of Switzerland. The Commission of Enquiry failed to see this basic distinction, which obscures the problem. This question has been studied by an international conference held at Interlaken under the auspices of UNESCO and by the International Mixed Commission for Research at High Altitudes of the ICSU and it is therefore right and proper to refer to these activities of other scientific bodies of the United Nations, which should have been consulted in a question concerning life at high altitudes and related problems. This idea does not appear to have occurred to the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, which has failed to see its scientific possibilities and its social implications in connexion with life at high altitudes.

In this connexion, we wish to cite a paragraph contained in another part of the reply: "Professor Monge declared that atropine sensitivity of Indians is greatly decreased. We have asked different doctors to test this. Despite his statement that it was confirmed (without bibliographic quotations), the doctors asked by us have not confirmed such a difference. We therefore disagree that our statement that it was not confirmed is incorrect."

(E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1. - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 7).

The Peruvian Commission is not impressed by the argument in the passage quoted above because it is unfounded ("the doctors asked by us have not confirmed such a difference"). Who are these doctors? Can scientific premises be based on this opinion? Is this the way to seek the truth, while in the same breath requiring the representative of Peru to give bibliographic references?

The Peruvian Commission gives herewith the bibliographic references to be found in the publications transmitted to the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, which, possibly through forgetfulness, failed to take them into account. They are as follows: Aste-Salazar, J.H.: An. Fac. Med. Lima, 19:22, 1936; Monge, M., C.: Pesce, H.; et al. An. Fac. Med. Lima, 17:1 and ff., 1935; Monge, M., C.: Physiol. Rev. 23:166, 1943; Cabezas, F.: An. Fac. Med. Lima, 29: 316 and ff., 1946.

It will be seen from these works that the physiological and pharmacological aspects are closely linked and inseparable.

6. The United Nations Commission of Enquiry also attributes to the Peruvian representative the statement that two United States chemists said they had been unable to reach a conclusion on whether the chewing of coca leaf was

/beneficial

beneficial or harmful, adding such that they were making chemical estimations and had no possibility of reaching conclusions. "But the two chemists will probably be amazed to find it stated in the Conclusions of Professor Monge (paragraph 82 (b)) that they have 'been unable to reach any definite conclusion as to whether coca leaf chewing as a habit should be suppressed'. They are chemists who make chemical estimations and have no possibility of reaching such conclusions" (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1. - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 4).

Despite the small value attached to the chemists' opinion, the members of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, attach importance, among the unfavourable opinions elicited by the enquiry, to the views of farmers, miners, soldiers and even workers. (President of the Agricultural Society, an engineer at Cerro de Pasco, a "director of mines" and a lawyer at Cochabamba) (Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, pages 23, 24 and 25). If the United Nations Commission attaches so much value to the opinion of workers, why will it not accept that of the chemists?

7. The assertion that, mainly as a result of malnutrition, "these valuable people (Peruvian Indians) addict themselves to coca leaf chewing", implies that there is malnutrition at high altitudes; this is another of those questions that have never been scientifically studied. "But our analysis did not lead to the result that the Indian is degenerating; rather that, mainly as a result of malnutrition, these valuable people addict themselves to coca chewing (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1. - E/CN.7/AC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1, page 5).

The scientific fact established by Professor A. Hurtado, the only person who has done research work on the subject, is that two groups of workers in the highlands, at an altitude of 4,500 metres, had a better output than men at sea level. No difference in productivity was observed between these two groups, one of which was composed of coca chewers and the other of non-chewers. This fact is indicative of a perfect state of nutrition. Furthermore, deficiency diseases, such as pellagra, beri-beri, scurvy and rickets, have never been reported in the highlands. It is difficult to conceive that people capable of such tremendous effort suffer from undernourishment. Among them are to be found all the miners.

8. The Peruvian Commission has never questioned the scientific ability of the experts who compose the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf.

/On the contrary,

On the contrary, it takes pleasure in recognizing and paying an unqualified tribute to the high scientific ability of Professor F. Verzar, and would not hesitate to place under his direction the investigation of the scientific problem of which the Peruvian Government is seeking a solution.

What the Peruvian representative, the Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission and the Peruvian Government maintain is that the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf is a commission of investigation, of fact-finding, and not of scientific research. It has not attempted to sift and analyse the whole of the information relevant to the problem.

The oft repeated argument that the Peruvian Government asked for a "field survey (in the original Spanish: sobre el terreno") (E/1666/Add.1/Rev.1.-E/CN.7/AC.2/Add.1/Rev.1, page 8) arose from insufficient knowledge of the problem and to some extent of the Spanish language. What the Peruvian Government requested was: THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMISSION OF EXPERTS TO CARRY OUT A STUDY ON THE SPOT, IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), TO STUDY IN A SCIENTIFIC WAY THE PROBLEM OF THE EFFECTS OF COCA-LEAF CHEWING ON THE HUMAN ORGANISM IN GENERAL AND ON CERTAIN ORGANS IN PARTICULAR. (The Peruvian Commission's report, page 1, passage in italics).^{1/} The biological phenomena which occur at an altitude of 15,000 feet are different from those at sea level, and must be studied in situ, in other words, sobre el terreno (on the spot).

9. With regard to the closing paragraphs of the Final Declaration in the Peruvian Commission's report, which the United Nations Commission of Enquiry hopes will be rejected, the Peruvian Commission wishes to explain that the

^{1/} Note by the Secretary-General: When, in 1947, during its second session the Commission on Narcotic Drugs recommended to the Economic and Social Council that a commission of enquiry should be sent to Peru and such other of the countries concerned as might give their approval, it expressed the opinion that it would be advisable to combine such an enquiry with an enquiry on the spot into the possibilities of limiting the production and regulating the distribution of coca leaves.

In its resolution 159 IV (VII) of 10 August 1948, the Council laid down the following terms of reference for the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf:

".....to investigate the effects of chewing the coca leaf and the possibilities of limiting its production and controlling its distribution."

Final Declaration does not represent a personal opinion, but is a conclusion which the Peruvian Commission accepted by a unanimous vote and which the Peruvian Government approved when transmitting it to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

10. It is to be regretted that the Commission of Enquiry cited a newspaper article in support of its arguments, as this obliges us to cite other newspaper accounts, on the substance of which we do not wish to pass judgment and which the Peruvian Commission omitted from its first report for obvious reasons. We refer the opinion attributed to one of the members of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry in an article published in the Lima newspaper "El Comercio", which that Commission calls "the leading newspaper of Lima". The whole article will be found in Annex 1; we quote one paragraph from it below.

ARRIVAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION WHICH WILL STUDY THE COCA PROBLEM
Statements by Mr. Fonda, Chairman of the Commission. ("El Comercio",
12 September 1949, morning edition).

"Do you think that this habit of chewing the coca leaf is harmful to the inhabitants of the Sierra of Peru?" we asked our visitors.

"Of course it is," they answered very emphatically. "We think that it is a serious mistake on the part of the people of the Sierra of Peru, and even of the coastal regions - where the habit also exists - to regard the coca leaf as a healthy stimulant for the organism and as a substitute for natural foods; we believe that the daily chewing of coca leaf in order to extract the juice - in other words, the basic alkaloid - is not only definitely harmful and deleterious, BUT IS THE CAUSE OF THE RACIAL DEGENERATION OF MANY POPULATION GROUPS AND OF THE DECADENCE WHICH IS OBVIOUS IN MANY NATIVE INHABITANTS, AND EVEN THE HALF-CASTES, OF CERTAIN REGIONS OF PERU AND BOLIVIA. OUR STUDIES WILL CONFIRM THE TRUTH OF OUR STATEMENTS, AND WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO SUBMIT A RATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION BASED ON THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION AND ON EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD, TO SECURE THE TOTAL ERADICATION OF THIS PERNICIOUS HABIT". (See Annex I).

II. CONCLUSIONS

The United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf sums up its comments as follows:

"To sum up: the main difference between our opinion and that of Professor Monge (and obviously also of Dr. Donoso Torres) is that they think that now experimental research is necessary, while we consider the present knowledge, from laboratory experiments and especially from the critical evaluation of the social and nutritional influences, sufficient to give an answer to the problem.

"We would agree to an experiment, as Professor Monge wants one; we propose that as the first stage of the action against coca chewing (which we have proposed should be completed inside 15 years) a large planned experiment should be made on the basis of social changes and mainly nutritional amelioration.

"We would propose therefore that several regions should be chosen, one of which should be on the Altiplano, where only consumption of coca leaf goes on, and one of which should be in a producing region in the lowlands (where, from our observation, coca is also chewed). In these territories first the nutritional and general social conditions should be bettered, as has been proposed in our report.

"Parallel to this, the consumption of coca leaves must be stopped in these regions. In the selected Altiplano region, the import must be totally stopped. In the producing region, probably the whole production should be stopped if the local chewing is to be controlled.

"It has then to be observed how these changes will act on the population of this region. The co-operation of the United Nations organizations which we have proposed in our report, with financial help and a delegation of specialists, should be used. The experts of United Nations organizations should co-operate continuously, and the changes produced should be controlled by them.

"The result of such an experiment, in which - we repeat - social and nutritional factors are studied, might provide the final answer.

"We have little doubt as to its result, because in our opinion the experiment has been partly made already in the past, as mentioned in our report.

"If Professor Monge wants more experimental proof it has to be done on such a basis, but it will take years before its results can be known.

"Such an experiment by the Governments interested in coca chewing would be the first step in the fight against this habit. If its result should prove that coca is necessary, the farther campaign against it could be stopped."

/In brief,

In brief, the Peruvian Commission understands the above summary to mean:

1. that "the critical evaluation of the social and nutritional influences is sufficient to give an answer by means of a large, planned experiment made on the basis of social changes and mainly nutritional amelioration";
2. that this experiment would be carried out in selected regions in which the cultivation and consumption of coca would be prohibited and in which use would be made of "the co-operation of the United Nations organizations with economic aid and a delegation of specialists; the latter should co-operate continuously and the changes produced should be controlled by them".

The Peruvian Commission accepts in principle this proposal of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, which is in general agreement with the health and social policies of the Peruvian Government, but which must be ~~supplemented~~ supplemented by control experiments. It is obvious that an improvement of social and nutritional conditions in an under-developed region will increase the productivity of the population, whether or not the latter consumes coca leaf. Consequently, in order to obtain comparable results, it would be necessary, side by side with the proposed experiment, to choose similar regions where social and economic conditions would be improved while coca-leaf chewing was permitted to continue.

With reference to a social and nutritional experiment, the Peruvian Government, in its desire to further an enquiry into coca chewing, founded the National Institute of Andean Biology, as noted above, and has just concluded, through the Peruvian Indigenist Institute - an official organ attached to the Ministry of Labour and Indigenous Affairs - an agreement with Cornell University for carrying out, in situ, in the Vicos altiplano region (altitude 3,500 metres) in the Department of Ancash, an anthropological study, one of the purposes of which is: "to test hypotheses and conclusions on various aspects of the problem of the Indian, such as the use of coca and alcohol". It should be added that, in order that the results of the investigation should be of unimpeachable value, plans have been made for a preliminary basic survey lasting two years, for the creation of a chair of Quichua at Cornell University, and for denoting another two years to a synthesis of the available information, to serve as a basis for the study in applied anthropology to be carried out in the Vicos region. This means that

a serious and intelligent social and economic experiment will be conducted as a preliminary to practical work.

The Peruvian Commission therefore looks with favour on the suggestion of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry regarding such an economic and social experiment and wishes to point out that, when use is made of "the co-operation of the United Nations Organizations... with financial help and a delegation of specialists", those specialists should be familiar with the problem of life at high altitudes, following the example of Cornell University, the Smithsonian Institution, Yale University and other groups which have done and are doing conscientious work in Peru. Improvisation would not be conducive to good results.

The reservation mentioned in the penultimate paragraph of the conclusions in the reply, that many years of work will be required, is scientifically sound, and we feel that it is not an obstacle but on the contrary an advantage in reaching an intelligent decision on a problem which affects the lives of many millions of human beings.

It would be advisable to establish in advance, before an anthropological study is made in situ, standards of normality which can later be used as a unit of measurement in estimating the results of the proposed experiment. A similar experiment in social anthropology, demanding an adequate period of time, is that being carried out by the research scientists of Cornell University in Vicos.

In view of the considerations explained in the preceding paragraph, we believe that use should be made of the knowledge of this problem possessed by Peruvian scientists and anthropologists, and that the Peruvian experts, particularly those who have specialized in Andean biology and who are building up this science from its foundations, as well as the European and American research scientists who have come to Peru to study life in the altiplano, should be called upon.

In conclusion:

The Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission recommends:

- (1) that, as a first step in the investigation of the problem, the experiment proposed by the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, should be adopted, with the necessary controls, as follows:

/(a) zone where

- (a) zone where coca chewing is prohibited;
- (b) zone where coca chewing is permitted.

(2) that, inasmuch as this is to be an intelligent experiment in cultural anthropology, in which Peru has taken the first step, consideration should be given in forming the commissions of experts which will perform this experiment to the scientists, universities and institutions which have amassed great experience with regard to the anthropological problem of the Peruvian altiplano, such as Cornell University, Yale University, the Smithsonian Institution, the Peruvian Indigenist Institute, the Institute of Ethnology, etc.

(3) that, standards of normality should be set up, which will require, apart from a general knowledge of anthropology, the physiological study of individuals and of the chemistry of their digestion; etc., for this purpose, use should be made of specialists who have great experience in this field, such as those of the Jungfrauoch International Station, the Institute of Biology, the Institute of Altitude Biology of Tucumán University, Turin University (formerly Instituto Mosso), the School of Aviation Medicine of Randolph Field, the Department of Medicine of the Army Chemical Centre of Edgewood, and generally speaking the institutes of aviation physiology and the departments of bio-chemistry, physiology and pharmacology of the Swiss universities which have been studying life at high altitudes. It may also be advisable to request the opinion of the technical bodies of the United Nations and of the Joint International Committee for the Study of Altitude Physics and Biology, appointed by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU).

(4) that, in accordance with the suggestion contained in the reply of the United Nations Commission of Enquiry, if the result of the economic and social experiment should prove that coca is not harmful all further campaign against it should be stopped.

(5) that the Peruvian Government should place its technical institutions at the disposal of the above-mentioned experts.

For the Peruvian Coca Leaf Commission
(signed) Dr. Carlos Monge M.
Chairman.

ANNEX I

ARRIVAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION WHICH WILL STUDY
THE COCA PROBLEM

"El Comercio", 12 September 1949

(Morning edition)

STATEMENTS BY DR. HOWARD B. FONDA, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION

Yesterday afternoon one of our reporters interviewed the four United Nations experts and two members of the United Nations Secretariat with regard to the Commission's plans and its programme of study and work in this country.

"Some time ago the Peruvian Government requested the United Nations to undertake this important study on the effects of coca leaf chewing on the Indian and half-caste population of this country and to examine carefully the possibilities of limiting the production and regulating the distribution of coca leaves", said Mr. Fonda in reply to our question concerning the origin of the Commission of which he is Chairman. He added that the representative of Peru had stated in the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the Economic and Social Council that "the habit of chewing coca leaves was a matter of international importance" which directly concerned a number of South American countries in addition to Peru, those countries being Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and the northern part of Argentina.

HE RECALLED THAT THE PERUVIAN REPRESENTATIVE HAD ALSO SAID ON THAT OCCASION THAT COCA LEAF CHEWING HAD BEEN PRACTISED IN THOSE COUNTRIES FOR OVER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS, THAT IS TO SAY, SINCE BEFORE THE SPANISH CONQUEST; THAT MILLIONS WERE VICTIMS OF THIS HABIT, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE WORKING CLASS; AND THAT IT WAS THEREFORE AN URGENT MATTER TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT THIS HABIT WAS HARMFUL, BY MAKING AN EXHAUSTIVE STUDY OF THE PROBLEM, AS THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT HAD PROPOSED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ITS SOCIAL, MEDICAL, ECONOMIC, AGRICULTURAL, PHARMACEUTICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND NUTRITIONAL ASPECTS.

"Do you think that this habit of chewing the coca leaf is harmful to the inhabitants of the Sierra of Peru"? we asked our visitors.

"Of course it is", they answered very emphatically. "We think that it is a serious mistake on the part of the people of the Sierra of Peru, and of

/the coastal regions

the coastal regions - where the habit also exists - to regard the coca leaf as a healthy stimulant for the organism and as a substitute for natural foods; we believe that the daily chewing of coca leaf in order to extract the juice in other words, the basic alkaloid - is not only definitely harmful and deleterious, BUT IS THE CAUSE OF THE RACIAL DEGENERATION OF MANY POPULATION GROUPS AND OF THE DECADENCE WHICH IS OBVIOUS IN MANY NATIVE INHABITANTS, AND EVEN THE HALF-CASTES, OF CERTAIN REGIONS OF PERU AND BOLIVIA. OUR STUDIES WILL CONFIRM THE TRUTH OF OUR STATEMENTS, AND WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO SUBMIT A RATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION BASED ON THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION AND ON EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD, TO SECURE THE TOTAL EPADICATION OF THIS PERNICIOUS HABIT".

"Do you think that stringent governmental measures will be sufficient to eradicate the habit of coca leaf chewing and to suppress cocaine addiction in this country"?

"Certainly not", said Mr. Fonda. "This is a vast problem, and it must be studied thoroughly to ascertain its origins and ramifications. Governmental measures will have little result unless they are perfectly rational and are accompanied by the necessary remedies. The Peruvian native believes that by chewing coca leaf he feeds himself and provides a healthful stimulant for his system. He must be shown that in order to satisfy hunger and thirst he must eat healthful and nourishing food and drink good water. This result can be obtained only by intensive education, to eradicate the idea, held not only by the indigenous inhabitants, aborigines and half-castes, but also by the whites who live in the Sierra and who are also coca leaf chewers, that it is impossible to live in or near the Andes without becoming addicted to the pernicious habit of chewing coca leaf".

"Are you familiar with other aspects of the problem"?

"Yes", was the answer. "We know that because coca leaves are easily grown in certain parts of Peruvian territory, the cocaine vice has become widespread in this country; that there are several factories producing cocaine sulphate, which facilitate the manufacture of cocaine hydrochloride - the salt used by addicts; and that this product is not only clandestinely consumed in alarming quantities in the country itself, but also enters into international contraband traffic which has spread as far as the United States

/of America.

of America. We believe that the Peruvian Government will be able to solve the problem of illegal and harmful cocaine manufacture and completely suppress the traffic in this drug, both within the country and for export".

"When did the United Nations reach a decision on the Peruvian Government's request"?

"THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS AT ITS SECOND SESSION EXAMINED THAT REQUEST WITH GREAT CARE AND RECOMMENDED TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL THAT A COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY SHOULD BE SENT TO PERU AND TO SUCH OTHER COUNTRIES AS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SUCH AN INVESTIGATION, ADDING THAT IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO MAKE A SERIOUS ENQUIRY INTO THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIMITING THE PRODUCTION AND REGULATING THE DISTRIBUTION OF COCA LEAVES.

"THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL APPROVED THE DESPATCH OF A COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY TO PERU, AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AT ITS THIRD SESSION, HELD IN PARIS, APPROPRIATED THE NECESSARY FUNDS".

"Later", added Mr. Fonda, "the Council, at its eighth session, requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to select for membership of the Commission of Enquiry two experts in the international administration and control of narcotic drugs and two medical experts to be chosen after consultation with the World Health Organization. At its fourth session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs appointed the four experts who have now arrived in your delightful city".

The Chairman of the Commission then told us that the Economic and Social Council at its last session had taken note of the appointments and had requested the members of the Commission to start work in Peru not later than the second week of September 1949. Moreover, the Council granted the request made by the Bolivian Government in April 1949 for the study to be extended to its territory, and asked the experts to continue their work in Bolivia after completing their task in Peru.

"Then in six weeks time you will go to Bolivia"?

"We do not know yet", replied the Chairman of the Commission. "The Council requested the United Nations General Assembly to appropriate before 30 September 1949 the additional funds necessary to enable the Commission to spend 'at least three months' in Peru and Bolivia. The Council instructed the

Commission of Enquiry to prepare a report on its work at the conclusion of its investigation. Consequently, if the General Assembly appropriates the necessary funds, the Commission will continue in Bolivia the work it is about to undertake in Peru".

We thanked Mr. Fonda and the other members of the Commission for the interview, and they in turn begged us to say in the pages of this leading Peruvian newspaper how glad they were to be visiting our country.

This article called forth the following editorial in the 13 September 1949 issue of "El Comercio".

THE COCA PROBLEM

"El Comercio", 13 September 1949
(Morning edition)

We suppose that the correction issued by the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf to the statements made to the press by some of its members upon their arrival in Lima, refers to their assertion that coca chewing has harmful effects. IF THAT IS SO, THE CORRECTION WAS CALLED FOR, BECAUSE THE IMPRESSION WAS GIVEN THAT THEY HAD ALREADY SETTLED THE VERY QUESTION THEY HAD COME TO STUDY. As the Commission has stated that the newspaper article in question does not represent its point of view, it is perhaps to be regretted, seeing the importance of the subject that it did not avail itself of this opportunity to express its real views.

It would, for example, be interesting to know what distinction the Commission draws between the coca habit and cocaine addiction, that is to say, between coca leaf chewing which is practiced by the inhabitants of the Sierra and which is about to be investigated to ascertain whether or not it is harmful, and the cocaine vice which results in human degradation and should be suppressed, a task which the Peruvian Government is carrying out. Our country could certainly have resolved this question with the aid of its own scientists, without having to have recourse to the United Nations unnecessarily. This result could have been obtained by entrusting the matter to the recently set up and highly qualified commission of Peruvian scientists and experts on the problem. We would thus have avoided foreign

/interference

interference in problems which are of domestic concern.

It would seem that Peru will be the only country in which the Commission will work. It will carry out a study "Survey on the effects of the chewing of the coca leaf on the indigenous population of that country". This survey will undoubtedly be interesting; and it will have useful results if it is correlated with the findings of the Commission composed of Peruvian specialists.

The correction further states: "In addition, the team of experts will conduct on-the-spot investigations into the possibilities of limiting the production and regulating the distribution of coca leaves". In our view this question, which on the practical plane is a matter for internal control by the Government rather than a problem of scientific research, was resolved by our Government when it established the coca monopoly.

The report in question is given below:

STATEMENTS BY THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY ON THE COCA LEAF

This morning the United Nations Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf visited the Minister of Foreign Relations and handed to him the following statement:

Lima, 12 September 1949

The Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, sent by the United Nations at the request of the Peruvian Government, arrived at Lima yesterday in order to study on the spot the effects of the chewing of coca leaves and the possibilities of limiting their production and controlling their distribution.

The Commission will study these questions in a completely objective and comprehensive manner and on a scientific basis.

The Commission was surprised to see today in a morning newspaper certain statements attributed to the Commission concerning the problems which it has come to study. The United Nations Commission wishes to make it clear that those statements do not represent either its point of view or that of its Secretary.

The Commission ventures to attach a press release which it issued yesterday to representatives of the local press.

/PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY ON THE COCA LEAF

The four-member team of experts who comprise the United Nations Commission of Enquiry into the effects of coca leaf chewing, left Lake Success on 10 September for a one month's stay in Peru where they will carry out a field survey on the effects of the chewing of the coca leaf on the indigenous population of that country. In addition, the team of experts will also conduct on-the-spot investigations into the possibilities of limiting the production and regulating the distribution of coca leaves.

The four experts are: Professor M. Granier-Doyeux, Professor F. Verzar, Mr. H. B. Fonda and Mr. P. Razet. In addition, four United Nations Secretariat members accompany the Commission. They are Vladimir Pastuhov, who will act as Principal Secretary, Manuel Lopez-Rey, Deputy Secretary, Grace Bocquet, Administrative Assistant, and Lucia Rodriguez-Orgaz, Secretary.

The request for this survey was originally made by the Government of Peru. As explained by the representative of that country before the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and before the Economic and Social Council, "the habit of chewing coca leaves was a matter of international importance" which directly concerned a number of South American countries in addition to his own. These other countries were Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and the northern part of Argentina.

He added that coca leaf chewing had been practised in all these countries for over 400 years. "Millions", he said, indulged in this habit, with most of the addicts belonging to the working class. The question of whether this habit was harmful or not was still "highly controversial" and therefore, said the Peruvian representative, an enquiry of the type proposed by his country presented aspects of a social, medical, economic, agricultural, nutritive and administrative nature.

At its second session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs gave careful consideration to the request of the Peruvian Government and recommended to the Economic and Social Council that a Commission of Enquiry be sent to Peru and to such other countries concerned as might express an interest in such an enquiry. In addition, the Commission recommended that the investigating

/team carry

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team carry out an on-the-spot enquiry into the possibilities of limiting the production and regulating the distribution of coca leaves.

At its seventh session, the Economic and Social Council approved the despatch of the Commission of Enquiry to Peru as proposed by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Funds for this project were approved by the third regular session of the General Assembly in Paris.

Later, the Council, at its eighth session, requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to select, for membership of the Commission of Enquiry, a team of two experts in the international administration and control of narcotic drugs and two medical experts to be chosen after consultation with the WHO.

At its fourth session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs elected the four experts already mentioned above.

The Economic and Social Council at its last session took note of these elections and requested the members of the Commission of Enquiry to start work in Peru not later than the second week of September 1949. Moreover, as the Bolivian Government had requested in April 1949 that the investigations be extended to Bolivian territory, the Council advised the experts to carry out their tasks in that country also.

To this effect the Council requested the General Assembly to appropriate before 30 September 1949 the additional funds necessary to enable the Commission to spend "at least three months" in Bolivia and Peru. The Council also directed the Commission of Enquiry to prepare a report on its findings at the conclusion of its investigations in the field.

Therefore, if the General Assembly appropriates the necessary funds, the team of experts will carry out its tasks in both Bolivia and Peru, instead of only conducting a month's survey in Peru.