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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Tenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 3 May 1955, at 3 p.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. VAILLE	France
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. SALDANHA	India
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. HOSSICK ) Mr. FARMILLO )	Canada
	Mr. TSAO	China
	Mr. LABIB	Egypt
	Mr. PANOPOULOS	Greece
	Mr. ARDALAN	Iran
	Mr. RABASA	Mexico
	Mr. CALLE y CALLE	Peru
	Mr. FORYS	Poland
	Mr. OZKOL	Turkey
	Miss VASILYEVA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. WALKER	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. ANSLINGER	United States of America
	Mr. NIKOLIC	Yugoslavia
<u>Observers:</u>	Mr. DANNER	Federal Republic of Germany
	Mr. OHTAKA	Japan
	Mr. GRANDJEAN	Switzerland
<u>Also present:</u>	Mr. MAY ) Mr. ATZENWILER )	Permanent Central Opium Board
<u>Representative of a specialized agency:</u>	Dr. HALBACH	World Health Organization
<u>Representatives of non-governmental organizations:</u>		
<u>Category B and Register:</u>		
	Mrs. SMITH	International Council of Nurses
	Mrs. SMITH	International Federation of Women Lawyers
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. YATES	Director, Division of Narcotic Drugs
	Mr. FULTON	Division of Narcotic Drugs
	Mr. PASTUHOV	Secretary of the Commission

DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS TENTH SESSION AND DRAFT RESOLUTIONS  
SUBMITTED BY THE RAPPORTEUR (E/CN.7/L.93 and Add.1)

The CHAIRMAN asked the Commission to consider the draft report on diacetylmorphine (E/CN.7/L.93), which would become section VII of the Commission's report on its tenth session.

Mr. SALDANHA (India), Rapporteur, said that whatever merit the draft report might have should be credited to the Secretariat for it had done much more than he had to prepare it. He would, however, take his share of any adverse criticism. He thought that paragraph VII.2 should mention the measures taken by Canada and the United Kingdom to discontinue not only the importation but also the manufacture of diacetylmorphine at the end of 1955.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) endorsed the Rapporteur's suggestion. The original text would imply that the United Kingdom had permitted the importation of heroin, which had never been the case. It was manufacturing it at the present time, but had decided to discontinue the manufacture at the end of 1955.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of France, corrected the statement attributed to him in the draft report. He had said that his Government would not prohibit the drug so long as the members of the medical profession considered it necessary for the purpose of giving relief to certain patients.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) requested that the report should name the six countries which had not yet prohibited the use of diacetylmorphine or had not expressed the intention of doing so.

Mr. SALDANHA (India), Rapporteur, took note of the corrections requested.

Mr. PANOPOULOS (Greece) thought that the defaulting countries would go along with the general view if they were permitted to use diacetylmorphine

(Mr. Panopoulos, Greece)

as long as no other synthetic drug had been discovered which would be less toxic and still have the same therapeutic value. He wondered whether a clause to that effect should not be inserted in the report.

The CHAIRMAN said that the report would merely record the statements which had actually been made and the decisions taken in meeting. No statement had been made along the lines indicated by the Greek representative, and no mention should therefore be made of such a statement in the report.

The draft report (E/CN.7/L.93), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretary to read the draft resolution on diacetylmorphine which the Rapporteur had very wisely included in the draft report, immediately following the explanatory text.

At the request of the Greek representative, it was decided that the word "very" should be inserted in paragraph (c) of the preamble before the words "dangerous addiction-producing properties".

The preamble, as amended, was adopted without discussion.

At the request of the Peruvian representative, it was decided that the clause "as shown in documents E/CN.7/289 and E/CN.7/289/Add.1" was deleted from operative paragraph 1.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) asked that the two operative paragraphs should be voted on separately.

Paragraph 1 was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

At the request of the Yugoslav representative, it was decided that the words "the use" should be inserted after the word "prohibit" in operative paragraph 2 by a vote of 12 to 2, with 1 abstention.

Mr. HOSSICK (Canada) said he had voted against the Yugoslav amendment because Canada intended to use heroin until it had exhausted its stocks.

Paragraph 2, as amended, was adopted by 12 votes to 3.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that although the United Kingdom had decided to discontinue the manufacture of diacetylmorphine at the end of 1955, he had voted against operative paragraph 2 because he wished to protect the freedom of the medical profession in countries where the profession still desired to use the drug. His vote was consistent with his opposition to imposing on Governments an obligation to prohibit new drugs, natural or synthetic, regardless of the views of the medical profession. The United Kingdom reserved the right to take a final decision when the time came.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of France, said that he had voted against the prohibition for the reasons given in the report as amended.

He then called for a vote on the draft resolution (E/CN.7/L.93) as a whole, as amended.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 12 votes to 3.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Commission to consider the draft report on the question of official forms for the prescription of narcotics (E/CN.7/L.93/Add.1).

At the request of the Egyptian representative, it was decided to delete the first phrase in brackets in paragraph II.55.

At the request of the United Kingdom representative, it was decided that the word "consumption" in the third sentence of paragraph II.57 should be provisionally placed between inverted commas.

At the request of the Yugoslav representative, it was decided that the words "had also shown" in the same sentence should be replaced by the words "also seemed to show".

On the initiative of the United States representative, and at the suggestion of the Chairman, it was decided that paragraph II.58 should be redrafted as follows:

"The representative of the World Health Organization was requested to see whether his Organization could usefully advise on the manner in which a prescription for a narcotic drug should generally be drawn up, particularly so as to prevent any tampering with, or improper use of, the prescription."

The draft report on the question of official forms for the prescription of narcotics (E/CN.7/L.93/Add.1) was adopted as amended.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON NARCOTICS (E/CN.7/289, chapter VII; E/CN.7/300 and 301; ST/SOA/SER.K/36 and 37; E/CN.7/L.103, L.107, L.110, L.114)

The CHAIRMAN opened debate on scientific research on narcotics, asked the representative of Canada to make a general statement, and welcomed Mr. Farmilo.

Mr. HOSSICK (Canada) presented to the Commission Mr. Farmilo, Technical Adviser to the Canadian delegation and a scientist in the Food Drug Laboratories of the Department of National Health and Welfare at Ottawa. Mr. Farmilo, who had done important research work in Canada on the origin of opium, was one of the authors of document ST/SOA/SER.K/36.

Mr. FARMILLO (Canada) wished to explain to the Commission the methods developed by scientists of the Food and Drug Laboratories to determine the origin of opium and the results of the continuation of the experiments begun the preceding year.

The time had come for the Commission to decide on what could be done with the results of the laboratory work. Mr. Anslinger who, as far back as 1947, had advocated a practical programme for the determination of the origin of opium had submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.7/L.103) on the subject. It was no doubt a source of great satisfaction to him to see that his concept was about to materialize.

Much progress had been made in the scientific field owing to the co-operation of scientists of several countries and to the work of Mr. Fulton and the Secretariat. Scientists engaged in the work had had the support of the Commission. Even the opium-producing countries, whose position was quite difficult, were considering the possibility of application on an international scale of the scientific methods to determine the origin of opium. That was an encouraging manifestation because co-operation was necessary in the application of scientific methods.

On page 2 of document ST/SOA/SER.K/36, it was shown that Canadian scientists had used different methods: the ash method; the macroscopic and microscopic methods for morphine, codeine, porphyroxine and sometimes thebaine, papaverine

(Mr. Farmilo, Canada)

and narcotine, following the methods developed by the Secretariat; and lastly the new method of electrophoresis. That method consisted of applying a voltage across a wet piece of filter paper to which drops of a solution of opium in acetic acid had been administered, the whole process being carried out in a refrigerator. The electric field caused the alkaloids which were positively charged to move towards the negative electrode. The distance they moved was called their mobility and each alkaloid had a characteristic mobility. The different alkaloids reached positions which formed a pattern characteristic of the whole group. He had brought with him several electrophogrammes, and would be willing to give a demonstration at the end of the meeting for any members who were interested. By using photographic methods and visual examination of the results with ultraviolet light, the characteristic differences between the different kinds of opium could be seen. The fluorescence of the opium compounds could not be seen in daylight or ordinary electric light; it was activated only by very short wave lengths of light. The method could be used for quantitative analyses.

The use of punched cards had aided scientists in arriving at conclusions. That method was briefly described in paragraph 10 of document ST/SOA/SER.K/36. He would be glad to demonstrate also the use of the cards after the meeting.

The results of ash analysis and macroscopic and microscopic alkaloidal methods were shown in table II on page 9 and in table III on page 13 of document ST/SOA/SER.K/36. The heading of table III on page 13 had been omitted. It should read: "Determination of origins by alkaloidal methods."

A score sheet of both the current year's and the preceding year's trials could be found on page 19 of the same document. Those results allowed Canadian scientists to conclude that the effectiveness of the methods had been demonstrated.

By reason of those observations, the following recommendations could be made: the opium research programme should be continued; Governments should send experts to Canada to study with Food and Drug scientists the methods already developed and to investigate new methods; countries which had not been active in the programme should send more samples; the Secretariat should set up an opium data punch-card system; the methods developed in actual seizures of

(Mr. Farmilo, Canada)

opium in illicit traffic should be applied; a seminar should be convened to enable scientists interested in the research programme to consider and discuss the different methods.

Mr. PANOPOULOS (Greece) felt that the results of Mr. Farmilo's work were highly satisfactory and that his conclusions, based on numerous analyses, were well founded.

For their part, Greek scientists had for some time been studying the use of a method of chromatographic separation and had noted that that method was much superior to older ones, even ash analysis, both from the point of view of the accuracy or results and of rapidity. The new method made it possible to determine the origin of twenty-five opium samples in four hours. The only remaining question had been whether time affected opium samples and whether the results obtained with two- or three-year-old samples differed from those obtained with recent ones. Experience had showed that the time element played no part in the matter and he thought that that method and Mr. Farmilo's would make it possible henceforward to determine the origin of opium samples accurately and rapidly. That could be put to the test at any time by sending samples of opium to laboratories without indicating their origin. Greek experts would go on with their research to perfect the methods already discovered and perhaps to find new ones.

Mr. RABASA (Mexico) congratulated Mr. Farmilo on his remarkable work, which would undoubtedly yield entirely satisfactory results and very useful conclusions for future research on the origin of opium. However, it should be remembered that the research work that was being done was of a scientific nature and that the results must be absolutely accurate.

He explained why his country had not at first provided samples of opium. Mexico was not, and had no intention of becoming, an opium-producing country. Mexican legislation prohibited the cultivation of the poppy plant and the production of opium, and that legislation was very strictly enforced. Hence, the only opium the Mexican authorities had at their disposal was seized opium which had been either illicitly produced in Mexico or brought into the country

(Mr. Rabasa, Mexico)

from abroad. Since, however, the report of the Committee of Chemical Experts had listed Mexico among the countries which had not contributed samples, he had, out of courtesy, personally recommended that the Mexican authorities should send samples of seized opium to the Secretariat. Accordingly, his Government had, in July 1954, provided the Secretariat with three samples, explaining its position and emphasizing that it could not furnish samples of opium officially guaranteed to be of Mexican origin. Subsequently, the Secretariat had forwarded to the Mexican Government an analysis of two of the three samples - UN 97 and UN 98. That analysis revealed that the two samples were more or less similar and came from a type of opium which was apparently different from the types of all the samples sent to the Secretariat by other countries. The Secretariat had also stated: "However, it would be impossible to base any firm opinion as to the type of Mexican opium on one good sample, especially as its authenticity, as regards production in Mexico, is not completely certain."

Mr. Farmilo's research was being done for scientific, legal and political reasons. From the scientific point of view, the Mexican delegation could not grant that the purpose of the analyses was to determine a standard type of Mexican opium, since the Mexican Government had not been in a position to furnish samples officially recognized as being of Mexican origin. From the legal and political points of view, the analyses of the seized opium could assist the Commission in taking future decisions because they made possible an accurate determination of the origins of the opium. That was why he regretted that his Government could not co-operate more fully with the chemists by providing samples of opium of established Mexican origin.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) congratulated Mr. Farmilo on his valuable work and supported his recommendations. The United States draft resolution (E/CN.7/L.103) had been prompted by the excellent results of that work.

Mr. OZKOL (Turkey) also congratulated Mr. Farmilo. As an opium-producing country, Turkey was particularly interested in Mr. Farmilo's research; that was why it had provided samples and would continue to do so. The value of

(Mr. Ozkol, Turkey)

methods so far used to determine the origin of opium had not yet been universally recognized, but, through the untiring efforts of experts like Mr. Farmilo, methods of unquestionable value would certainly be developed in the near future.

The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of all the members of the Commission, congratulated Mr. Farmilo, Mr. Panopoulos, their assistants and the Secretariat experts on the excellent work they had done, and thanked the United States delegation for the valuable material help it had given the Secretariat. He proposed that the Commission's congratulations and thanks should be placed on record in its report.

It was so decided.

Mr. RABASA (Mexico) requested that his observations on the Mexican samples should also be recorded in the Commission's report.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Commission should take note of documents ST/SOA/SER.K/36 and 37 and E/CN.7/301 and proceed to document E/CN.7/300. He proposed that the Commission should congratulate the experts of the States mentioned in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the latter document on the valuable assistance they had given the Secretariat.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretariat whether the charts referred to in the last sentence of paragraph 23 of document E/CN.7/300 would be published in the near future.

Mr. FULTON (Secretariat) said that the charts could not be published before the end of the Commission's session, but the Secretariat had copies which members could consult. Those charts contained the most accurate data that the Secretariat had been able to assemble recently, and provided a comparison between the Secretariat's results and those obtained by governmental narcotics

(Mr. Fulton, Secretariat)

laboratories in Turkey, India and Japan.

Mr. ARDALAN (Iran) observed that, in accordance with the promise referred to on page 3 of Annex A, the Iranian Government had provided the Secretariat with twelve additional samples.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.