

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Fourth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Hold at Lake Success, New York,
on Friday, 20 May 1949, at 3 p.m.

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<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. KRASOVEC	Yugoslavia
<u>Members:</u>	Colonel SHARMAN	Canada
	Mr. HSIA	China
	Brigadier EL-KHOULI Bey	Egypt
	Mr. BOURGOIS	France
	Mr. MENON	India
	Mr. RABASA	Mexico
	Mr. KRUYSSIE	Netherlands
	Mr. AVALOS	Peru
	Mr. OR	Turkey
	Mr. ZAKUSOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. HUISON	United Kingdom
	Mr. ANSLINGER	United States of America

<u>Also Present:</u>	Mr. MAY	President of the Permanent Central Opium Board and of the Supervisory Body
	Sir Harry GREENFIELD	Vice-President of the Permanent Central Opium Board
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. STEINIG	Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, representing the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of social affairs
	Mr. PASTUNOV	Secretary of the Commission

ILLICIT TRAFFIC - Statement by the representative of Peru

The CHAIRMAN stated that, although the discussion on illicit traffic had been closed, the Peruvian representative had asked to make a further statement to the Commission on that subject.

Mr. AVALOS (Peru) said that he had just received information from the Peruvian authorities on the arrest of a band of men indulging in cocaine traffic on the American continent. The official Government report would be transmitted to the Secretariat as soon as the Peruvian delegation had received it.

He then gave the names and background of the leaders of the band, and added that telegrams had been sent to chiefs of police giving the information which had been obtained on the members and their accomplices. Two illicit factories for the preparation of cocaine had recently been discovered in Peru and the offenders had been arrested. The group had been found to have ramifications in Panama and several other countries. The occurrence confirmed the views already expressed by the Peruvian representative that countries should enact appropriate legislation in the field of narcotics and should strengthen co-operation between police and narcotics officials on the international plane.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) said that the Peruvian authorities were to be congratulated on the action they had taken to suppress the illicit traffic in cocaine. There were eight licensed and ten unlicensed cocaine factories in Peru with a reported

production of about 5,000 kilogrammes a year. The medical needs of the world amounted to some 1,500 kilogrammes a year, and the total production was therefore three times as great as the medical needs.

He felt that the Government of Peru had acted wisely in closing down all cocaine factories in its territory, as that action would greatly facilitate the task of controlling the production of that drug.

The CHAIRMAN drew the members' attention to the fact that the Commission had not drawn up any recommendation or resolution on the question of illicit traffic. The Rapporteur should stress in his report the two main points of the discussion, namely, the question of illicit traffic in Germany and the Commission's desire that co-operation between the occupying Powers should be established as soon as possible; and the necessity to curb the increase in the illicit traffic in the Middle and Near East. If the Commission agreed, the Secretariat might be asked to prepare a draft resolution or a recommendation to be included in the report expressing the Commission's views on the steps which should be taken to remedy the situation.

The Commission agreed that the Secretariat should prepare such a draft.

PERMANENT CENTRAL OPIUM BOARD AND SUPERVISORY BODY

- (a) Replies of Governments regarding resolution 123 (VI) E - Privileges and Immunities (N/IV/6)
- (b) Report on the work of the Board for 1948 (E/CB/4) -
- (c) Estimated world requirements of narcotic drugs in 1949 (E/DSB/6)

The CHAIRMAN invited the President of the Permanent Central Opium Board to address the Commission on the questions before it.

Mr. MAY (Permanent Central Opium Board) said that he was speaking both as President of the Permanent Central Opium Board and as President of the Supervisory Body.

With regard to point (a), a number of countries had replied to the Secretary-General's communications but no reply had as yet been received from France. French officials had always been very courteous to members of the

/Supervisory

Supervisory Body but since the majority of those members had to travel through France, it would be greatly appreciated if the French authorities would grant them the same privileges accorded by other Governments.

On points (b) and (c), Mr. May drew attention to the salient features raised in the documents. With regard to the question of control of production, the work of the Board could only be successfully carried out if Governments sent in accurate statistics promptly. Any new convention should contain a clause for the application of sanctions to countries which continually failed to fulfil their obligations by not sending in returns. There had been an improvement in that respect but the position was still far from satisfactory. The USSR had promised to send in without delay some returns from its area which were missing. The report showed that the Governments of Italy and Poland were again collaborating with the Board.

With regard to the publication of statistics, Mr. May pointed out that since the war the Board had been working on a different system: Each December it hoped to publish a complete summary showing movement of drugs, production etc., and also supplying information on raw materials. Detailed statistics would follow a few months later.

The Board was seriously concerned with the very high consumption of heroin in certain countries, especially Finland, which was the largest per capita consumer of that drug in the world. It was anxious that steps should be taken to curtail medical practices which permitted such a high consumption of heroin.

Both the Board and the Supervisory Body were faced with difficult problems in connexion with new Governmental units such as Germany, Palestine and Korea which furnished statistics which were incomplete and partial. The practice of the Supervisory Body had been to use as a basis the returns it had received from parts of those units and then estimate what the figures would be for those units which had not sent in an estimate.

The Supervisory Body felt that every country, regardless of its political regime, should be allowed to import the necessary drugs for medical purposes.

/Colonel

Colonel SHARMAN (Canada) said that he had been grateful for the opportunity afforded him as Vice President to participate in the work of the Supervisory Body.

With regard to the Board's report, there were a number of points which required careful study by the Commission, such as the question of the limitation of production, to which specific reference was made in pages 15 and 16.

Mr. BOURGOIS (France) referred to the question of privileges and immunities and said that the delay in the Government's reply was due merely to physical reasons and not to negligence.

During his visit to Paris at the time of the third session of the General Assembly, Mr. May had received special privileges normally accorded only to heads of missions.

Mr. MAY (Permanent Central Opium Board) remarked that, as he had already stated, he had always found the French authorities most courteous and helpful but that he had raised the question of privileges and immunities on behalf of all the members of the Supervisory Body who had occasion to visit France.

Mr. HUTSON (United Kingdom) wished to make clear the position of his Government with regard to the use of heroin, the consumption of which had increased in the United Kingdom, although not excessively. The medical authorities of both England and Scotland had recently studied the question and the conclusion had been reached that the United Kingdom was not prepared at present to suppress the consumption of heroin in its territory. The medical findings were that heroin was an irreplaceable drug in certain fields, particularly in surgery. On the other hand, the bulk of heroin used in the United Kingdom was used in very small dilutions for cough medicines and some authorities felt that in such medicines codeine was an adequate substitute. The matter was being pursued further to determine whether the use of heroin for such purposes should be prohibited, although such a decision would entail considerable administrative difficulties.

Mr. OR (Turkey) said that his country had for many years prohibited the import of heroin and he advised other countries to adopt the same policy.

Mr. BOURGOIS (France) stated that on 22 February 1949 the French National Academy of Medicine had adopted a resolution submitted by Professor Aubertin opposing the possible prohibition of heroin in France. The countries prohibiting the import of heroin did not represent the majority of the world's population.

In France heroin was used as a sedative and in respiratory and tubercular diseases, but its use was carefully controlled by the issue of certificates. Heroin was used by sick people and drug addicts, its use by the former obviously being the more important. The prohibition of the import of heroin would not prevent drug addicts from following their practices as they would continue to obtain their supply from illicit sources, and would therefore merely deprive the sick of a beneficial remedy. Mr. Bourgois added that the consumption of heroin in France had decreased by about one third.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) remarked that in his twenty years' administration of narcotic laws in the United States, he had received only one request for heroin from a physician who wanted to use it in the case of a tubercular patient.

Mr. AVALO (Peru) said that no special provisions existed in his country to control the consumption of heroin, but that for a number of years the Peruvian authorities had forbidden the import of that drug.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur should include the views of the Commission in his report and asked members whether they wished to make a recommendation on the application of sanctions against countries which failed to send in their returns.

/Mr. MAY

Mr. MAY (Permanent Central Opium Board) said that the question had not been specifically mentioned in the Board's report. Perhaps the Commission could take the matter up anew when it dealt with the question of the unification of conventions.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission's report might mention that some countries failed to send in statistics which made the work of the Commission and of the Board very difficult. The Chairman, in the name of the Commission, thanked the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Supervisory Body for the excellent reports they had submitted.

POPPY STRAW USED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF MORPHINE

Mr. STEINIG (Secretariat) gave the following additional information concerning the amount of morphine manufactured from poppy straw as compared with the total morphine production.

The total opium production for 1947 was 1,277 tons of which 490 tons were used to manufacture drugs for medical and scientific needs. Of that last figure 455 tons were used for the manufacture of morphine and the remaining 35 tons for medicinal opium. Accordingly, of a total of 53,764 kilogrammes of morphine manufactured in 1947, 49,599 kilogrammes were produced from opium and the remaining 4,165 kilogrammes were manufactured from poppy straw or poppy capsules. The 1947 production of morphine from poppy straw amounted to 54 per cent of the 7,696 kilogrammes produced from the same raw material in 1946.

It should be noted that figures were lacking on morphine manufactured in Poland, which was an important source of the drug, second only to Hungary.

During the war, Switzerland had also used poppy straw in the manufacture of morphine and its production figure for 1946 amounted to 1,806 kilogrammes. However, after the war, when it once more became possible to import opium into Switzerland in the normal manner, there was no longer any need to use poppy straw and the 1947 figure for morphine production from poppy straw fell to 112 kilogrammes. Similar reductions in the amount of morphine manufactured from poppy straw had been noted in France and Germany. In France the amount had diminished from

3,178 kilcgrammes in 1946 to 2,300 kilogrammes in 1947; in Germany it had fallen from 1,623 kilogrammes in 1946 to only 526 kilogrammes in 1947. On the other hand, there had been an increase in morphine production from poppy straw in Hungary: it had risen from 312 kilogrammes in 1946 to 783 kilogrammes in 1947. Nevertheless, on the basis of the figures for those two years, it could be concluded that the importance of poppy straw as a raw material for the manufacture of morphine had decreased and was continuing to decline.

As suggested by the representative of France, the foregoing figures would be submitted to the Commission in document form.

Mr. KUIJSSE (Netherlands) noted that the principal difficulty in using poppy straw for morphine production lay in the absence of efficient machinery for separating the poppy heads from the stems. As soon as a machine had been perfected to do that work efficiently and economically, morphine manufacture from poppy straw could be expected to increase again.

FORM OF ANNUAL REPORTS: CHAPTER II ON DRUG ADDICTION
(E/CN.7/173, E/NR/1948/4)

Mr. STEINIG (Secretariat) emphasized the need to amend the form of annual reports required of Governments under article 21 of the 1931 Convention. The current form contained, under chapter II, only one general question on drug addiction drafted as follows: "Please mention any available information as to new developments regarding addiction in the country". It should be noted that the League of Nations circular letter on the subject was much more specific and contained many more questions. Accordingly, in consultation with the Bureau of the Commission, the Secretariat had drawn up a new draft text of paragraph 2 (E/CN.7/173) which was to replace the present paragraph 2 in the form of annual reports. As amended, the form would be sent out to Governments to serve as a basis for the reports required for the year 1949.

Colonel SHARMAN (Canada) agreed in principle that it was advisable for Governments to give more detailed information on the extent of drug addiction. He felt, however, that the proposed draft might place an impossible task on already over-burdened narcotics control officers. He referred particularly to the details required under

section A and doubted whether it would be practical to list large numbers of addicts by age and profession. Moreover, while criminal addicts usually had police records from which that information could be obtained, there were many non-delinquent addicts who had no criminal record and it did not seem reasonable to expect Governments to list them indicating age and profession.

In connexion with question 4 under section A, Colonel Sharman wondered whether supplies of drugs obtained by theft and burglary from hospitals, wholesale houses or retail drug stores would be considered to have been obtained from legitimate or illegitimate sources. Obviously, those places carried the drugs legitimately, and the question was certainly not intended to establish that fact. Great caution should be exercised not to include such ambiguous questions.

Brigadier EL-KHOULI (Egypt) agreed with the representative of Canada..

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) raised the question of whether to include in the category of addicts medical as well as non-medical cases. United States estimates did not ordinarily include medical cases.

Mr. KRUYSSSE (Netherlands) also felt that it would be difficult and burdensome to check all records for details of age and profession when a large number of addicts were involved. However, that type of information would be of great interest especially with respect to new addicts, and Governments might be asked, under section A, 2, to state if it could not be supplied for all addicts.

Referring to question 4 of the same section, Mr. Krusysse suggested substitution of the words "legally" and "illegally" for the phrases in the draft text.

Replying to the point raised by Mr. Anslinger, Mr. Krusysse thought mention should be made of so-called medical cases. While it was sometimes difficult to obtain data on the nature of medical cases, bona fide cases should not be ignored.

Finally, in question 3 under section B of the draft text, he wished the word "number" to be added after "nature".

Mr. HUTSON (United Kingdom) pointed out that the purpose of the first question under section A was to bring to light the particular professions in which preponderant numbers of addicts were to be found. For example, in the United Kingdom, of 375 adults, 82 were in the medical profession. If large numbers should be found in any other specific professions, that fact should be noted. In the same way, if analysis showed that most of the addicts were in the upper, middle or lower age groups, that fact should be stated. Mr. Hutson shared the perplexity of the Canadian representative regarding legitimate and illegitimate sources of supply. None of the addicts in the United Kingdom, for example, obtained the drugs from illicit sources. An illegitimate source would mean a supply which had been brought into the country illicitly.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Yugoslavia, noted that the most important fact to be determined under question 1 of section A was whether addiction was increasing among the younger or older groups. For example, while the figures might indicate a general decrease, there might still be an increase among young people. Moreover, in some countries which had few addicts, it would not be difficult to classify the information under the headings given. In larger countries, where efficient mechanical methods were available, it should also be possible to break down the figures. There was no need to list exact ages for all addicts; age groups would suffice to meet the requirements of scientific analysis.

Colonel SHARMAN (Canada) stated that, in addition to the individuals obtaining drugs from legitimate sources, there was also an unknown number receiving supplies from illicit channels.

He pointed out that the annual report of the Government of Canada touched on the question of the profession of drug addicts, but he stressed the heavy burden of obtaining information which authorities knew in advance would be largely inaccurate.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) indicated that, if only drug addictions known to authorities were listed, not much information would be forthcoming since the group that was unknown

to the authorities obtained supplies from illicit sources. Some reports gave erroneous impressions. For example, while the United Kingdom report stated that no addicts had received drugs from illicit sources, the fact that 140 pounds of opium had been seized would seem to indicate the existence of other addicts.

The form should clearly indicate what information was to be reported.

Mr. HSIA (China) recognized the difficulties involved in section A but stressed the usefulness of the information involved. He suggested that perhaps one general remark giving the profession, sex or age group in which the majority of the addicts fell would be sufficient for the time being.

Mr. ZAKUSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that he considered the draft form unsatisfactory and indicated that radical changes were needed.

While some countries with well-organized registers of drug addicts were in a position to reply to all the questions in the draft form, the questionnaire would also be addressed to countries with less highly developed administrations and to colonial territories which would certainly be unable to reply to all the questions, especially to point 4. If drugs were sold openly by the authorities, was such a supply to be interpreted as coming from legitimate or from illicit sources?

Moreover the questionnaire implied that the treatment of drug addicts was logical throughout the world. Actually many difficulties arose, for example, regarding the classification of opium pills as medical or non-medical treatment.

The questionnaire as drafted did not correspond to the current need to ascertain the number of drug addicts.

The CHAIRMAN indicated that since different, and in some cases, opposing views had been expressed with regard to the questionnaire, the Commission might well appoint a drafting Sub-Commission to redraft the form, taking into consideration all suggestions and criticism expressed during the discussion.

Mr. BOURGOIS (France) stated that it was important to consider drug addiction as a social phenomenon occurring under different conditions in Europe and in Asia, involving different social classes, involving police and medical treatment, but requiring widely divergent social remedies in Asia and in Europe. The questionnaire should take due account of that situation.

Colonel SHARMAN (Canada) indicated that the Commission's discussion would be extremely helpful to the proposed Sub-Commission.

If, as pointed out by the representative of the USSR, the draft questionnaire presented difficulties to well-established administrations, it would present even greater difficulties to colonial territories.

Colonel Sharman also agreed with the representative of France with regard to the effect of different social conditions on drug addiction, and expressed the view that it would be difficult for one form to cover both well-developed and under-developed drug administrations.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the form had been drawn up for highly advanced administrations and that its point of departure was the opinion prevailing in highly developed countries. A simple questionnaire was needed with clear questions which were not misleading and which would be understood by all administrations in the same way. Such a questionnaire would not prevent any country from making broader studies for its own use.

Mr. OR (Turkey) suggested that the drafting Sub-Commission might be able to meet at the same time as the Sub-Commission on the limitation of opium production if the same States were not represented on both bodies.

Mr. KRUYSSSE (Netherlands) stated that since the representative of the USSR had expressed very definite views on the questionnaire he should be a member of the drafting Sub-Commission. The USSR was, however, one of the opium producing countries represented on the other Sub-Commission and it would therefore be impossible for the two bodies to meet at the same time.

The CHAIRMAN felt that the Sub-Commission should be chosen first and that the time of its meeting could be arranged later. Since the proposals of the drafting Sub-Commission were not needed immediately,

its report could be submitted towards the end of the Commission's session.

The Commission appointed representatives of the following States to the drafting Sub-Commission: China, Canada, Egypt, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom and United States of America.

The CHAIRMAN indicated that the Vice-Chairman would preside at the meetings of the Sub-Commission.

DRUG ADDICTION (discussion continued)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the discussion of drug addiction at the morning meeting of the Commission had been interrupted on account of the absence of some members whose presence was essential during the consideration of the matter. He expressed regret that the Commission was inconvenienced and could not pursue its work as planned. He would do his best to avoid such situations in the future.

It was decided to defer further consideration of drug addiction.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.