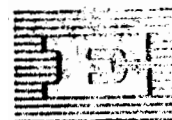


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ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Sixth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York  
on Wednesday, 2 May 1951, at 3 p.m.

CONTENTS:

- Illicit traffic (E/CN.7/223, E/CN.7/223/Add.1, E/CN.7/224,  
E/NS.1950/SUMMARY 5, E/NS.1950/SUMMARY 6) (continued)  
Draft interim agreement to limit the production of opium to medical  
and scientific needs (Conference Room Paper No. 9) (continued)

Chairman:

Mr. FAHMY

Egypt

Members:

Mr. SHARMAN

Canada

Mr. WEI

China

Mr. BOURGOIS

Mr. VAILLE

France

Mr. AMINI

Iran

Mr. MARTINEZ-LAVALLE

Mexico

Members: (continued)

Mr. KRUISSE	Netherlands
Mr. CABADA	Peru
Mr. OR	Turkey
Mr. ZAKUSOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Mr. HOARE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Mr. ANSLINGER	United States of America
Mr. NIKOLIC	Yugoslavia

Also present:

Mr. MAY	Chairman of the Permanent Central Opium Board
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Observers:

Mr. WOULEROUN	Belgium
Mr. SCHNEIDER	Switzerland

Secretariat:

Mr. HUANG	Division of Narcotic Drugs
Mr. BOLTON	Secretary of the Commission

ILLICIT TRAFFIC (E/CN.7/223, E/CN.7/223/Add.1, E/CN.7/224, E/NS.1950/SUMMARY 5, E/NS.1950/SUMMARY 6)(continued)

Mr. VAILLE (France) referred to information on seizures of pethidine appearing in document E/CN.7/227 and drew the attention of the members of the Commission to a report submitted by the Permanent Central Opium Board to the Economic and Social Council on statistics for 1949 and the Board's activities in 1950. The document gave figures on the manufacture and consumption of pethidine in the three principal consumer countries, namely, the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The consumption of pethidine in the United States had risen from nil in 1936 to 2,613 kg. in 1948 and 4,412 kg. in 1949; in the United Kingdom the consumption had risen for the same years from nil to 418 and then to 609 kg.; in France, it had risen from nil to 226 and then 238 kg.

The consumption of methadone had amounted in 1949 to 1,397 kg. in the United States, 46 kg. in the United Kingdom and there had been none in France. The Board had noted an increasing consumption of pethidine in all countries which had supplied statistics.

Despite its moderate wording, the Board's conclusion could be regarded as a real danger signal. Although an excellent system of control existed in the United States, the consumption of synthetic drugs had greatly increased in that country. For instance, in 1949 the United States had consumed 7,414 kg. of drugs, while in 1936 its consumption had amounted only to 2,226 kg. of morphine. The increase was accounted for exclusively by the consumption of synthetic drugs.

/The United States

The United States had estimated its needs in methadone for 1949 at 500 kg. but had actually consumed 1,397 kg. and had consequently increased its estimates for 1950 to 1500 kg. It was easy to foresee the consequences of such consumption for its increase could not be explained by medical needs. It was probably due to the fact that doctors were more willing to prescribe synthetic drugs than morphine.

Even in France, where pethidine had appeared on the market only in 1943, 7.5 per cent of all drug addiction cases, namely 52 out of 694, were cases of pethidine addiction.

Synthetic drugs had been mentioned in the report for the first time, but all indications were that it was just a beginning. Illicit consumption and traffic were bound to grow as licit manufacture and consumption increased. It was the Commission's duty to devote particular attention to the problem of illicit traffic in synthetic drugs.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) fully agreed with the representative of France that synthetic drugs were becoming an ever more important problem. There was a trend among morphine addicts to turn to synthetic drugs because they were easier to obtain. Many addicts forged prescriptions for them as they had for morphine. It was quite true that doctors were less disinclined to prescribe synthetic drugs than morphine although they had been warned on many occasions.

Mr. KRUYSSSE (Netherlands) said that there did not yet appear to be any particular danger from synthetic drugs in his country, but he agreed with the representative of France that the problem was important.

Turning to the reference to the Netherlands in paragraph 12 on page 8 of document E/CN.7/224, he suggested that the words "the figure is inconclusive" should be replaced by the words "the figure is incomplete". In that way the meaning would be clearer.

It was so agreed.

Mr. AMINI (Iran) drew attention to chapter IV of document E/CN.7/224 which was entitled "Origin of the Drugs" and asked on what basis the distinction was made between origin and sources and how it was decided from where a particular drug originated.

/Mr. HUANG

Mr. HUANG (Secretariat) explained that all the information in the document was taken from the annual reports and seizure reports sent in by governments.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) thought that the United Nations laboratory should by now be in a position to determine the origin of opium and suggested that it should be asked to put its research work into practice.

Mr. VAILLE (France) supported that suggestion. He informed the Commission of a seizure of 293 kg. of opium which had recently been made at Marseilles. A seizure involving such large quantities of the drug was quite unprecedented in France and was causing the authorities grave concern. A full report would be sent to the Commission in due course and his Government would be glad to send a sample of the opium seized to the United Nations laboratory for testing.

He congratulated the Secretariat on the excellent memorandum (E/CN.7/224) which had been prepared in record time.

Mr. MARTINEZ LAVALLE (Mexico) regretted that his Government's annual report had not arrived in time for the Commission's session and said he would outline a few of the major points it contained for the benefit of members. The most important aspect of his country's permanent campaign against the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs was the destruction of poppy plantations. In 1950, the same methods had been used as in previous years but the army had been called in to help the federal police and the narcotics police. At the same time, the administration of the federal police had been re-organized so that there was now an independent section to deal specifically with the campaign against illicit traffic. Good progress had been made during 1950 and 319 poppy plantations had been destroyed and two clandestine laboratories discovered. He went on to give details of the arrests and seizures that had taken place during the year. With regard to opium, it had been noticed that the traffickers had taken to selling other substances under the name of opium as well as highly adulterated opium. There was no cocaine or coca problem in Mexico and the heroin problem was decreasing.

/The Mexican

The Mexican Government was doing its best to increase its campaign against illicit traffic and to meet its international commitments. It was very grateful to the United States Government for its co-operation in suppressing frontier traffic and was convinced that international collaboration was essential in the great humanitarian campaign to stamp out illicit traffic in narcotic drugs.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) expressed great appreciation of the work which the Mexican Government was doing to suppress the illicit cultivation and traffic in drugs. The work was extremely difficult, often involving expeditions into dangerous and inaccessible territory and requiring great courage and fortitude. The campaign had received the personal attention of the highest officials in the Ministry of Health and, by its great achievements, the Mexican Government had shown how much could be done by countries which had the will to do it.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) said that his country did not figure in the Secretariat memorandum although he had himself forwarded the information. He notified the Commission that there had been no cases of illicit traffic either within Yugoslavia or on the frontier during 1950.

Mr. ZAKUSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to chapter VI of the memorandum (E/CN.7/224) and asked why the USSR army stocks were mentioned as a source of narcotic drugs discovered in the illicit traffic during 1950.

Mr. HUANG (Secretariat) repeated that all the information in the document was taken from annual reports or seizure reports submitted by governments. The only case in which the USSR army stocks had been mentioned was No. 267 submitted by the United Kingdom Government in respect of the British Zone of Germany.

Mr. HOARE (United Kingdom) explained that the case in question referred to a naturalized German of Dutch origin who had gained a little non-professional medical experience in the German army. He had subsequently been with a USSR army hospital and had succeeded in persuading them that he was a doctor.

/Presumably in

Presumably in this post he had access to USSR army stocks of opium. Subsequently, he had returned to the Western Zone of Germany and had again succeeded in persuading the authorities that he was a doctor and in obtaining employment as such in a hospital although in actual fact he was totally unqualified in medicine. Eventually he had been discovered to be an addict and to be prescribing for other addicts. The small quantity of 18 ampoules of opium which had been found in his possession had come from the stocks of the USSR army. It was quite easy to see how the opium could have been obtained by fraud. The paragraph as it stood gave a false impression for the USSR army stocks certainly could not be regarded as a source of illicit traffic on the basis of such an insignificant quantity obtained by fraudulent means.

Mr. MARTINEZ-LAVALLE (Mexico) said that, in view of the explanation given, the case in question appeared to come under sub-paragraph (1) which covered legitimate sources from which drugs were diverted by thefts, fraudulent means or burglaries.

Mr. ZAKUSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) proposed the deletion of sub-paragraph (2) (d) of paragraph 52.

The proposal was adopted unanimously.

Mr. KRUYSSSE (Netherlands) referred to the list of seizure reports on page 5 of document E/CN.7/224 and pointed out the discrepancy in the number of reports sent by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom on the one hand and France and the United States on the other. It was unlikely that the volume of illicit traffic differed greatly between the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France and the United States Zone of Germany, so it appeared that there was some difference of interpretation of the obligations involved in Article 23 of the 1931 Convention. It would be helpful if all governments could adopt the same approach to the question, and if some countries were sending in too many reports, they could cut them down. He felt personally however that all the seizures reported by his Government had been sufficiently important to warrant individual reports.

Mr. VAILLE (France) explained that his Government followed Article 23 to the letter and considered that it was not worth while to send in a separate report on all seizures made since the general conclusions to be drawn from any seizures without special features were included in the annual report. The difficulty obviously arose because of different interpretations of the phrase "each case... which may be of importance" in Article 23 of the 1931 Convention.

/Mr. SHARMAN

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) pointed out that the method of sending in seizure reports apparently differed from country to country. The document showed that, while some countries sent in a separate report on each seizure, others covered several seizures in a single report, as for example, the three United States reports covering 115 seizures.

The Commission took note of documents E/CN.7/223, E/CN.7/223/Add.1 and E/CN.7/224.

Mr. ANSLINGER (United States of America) pointed out that many seizure reports were received from Thailand but that few arrests were made in that country, and the sentences for traffickers did not usually exceed three months. He wished that fact to be included in the report to the Council.

Mr. VAILLE (France) noted that no interesting information had been received from Burma. That only showed that the Burmese Government should begin by concentrating its efforts on illicit traffic within its own borders.

Mr. HOARE (United Kingdom) said that it was mentioned in document E/CN.7/224 that 18 reports from Burma covering 75 seizures had been received.

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) referred members to case No. 635 (E/NS.1950/Summary 6) which contained a voluntary confession made by one of the traffickers arrested in Canada relating how drugs had been smuggled into Canada from Italy and Greece.

The Commission took note of documents E/NS.1950/Summary 5 and E/NS.1950/Summary 6.

DRAFT INTERIM AGREEMENT TO LIMIT THE PRODUCTION OF OPIUM TO MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC NEEDS (CONFERENCE ROOM PAPER No. 9) (continued)

Mr. VAILLE (France) suggested that the Commission should hear the views of the Belgian observer on the question of the interim agreement.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Woulbroun, Observer of the Belgian Government, took his seat at the Commission table.

/Mr. WOULBROUN

Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium) said that his Government had loyally taken part in the international action to limit the production, manufacture and trade in opium and other addiction-forming drugs to medical and scientific needs, and emphasized that it attached great importance to that action. It had hoped that an international opium monopoly could be established on a basis satisfactory to all the producing, manufacturing and consumer countries but the difficulties that had arisen during the current session showed that no such international agreement could be achieved at the present juncture. The Belgian Government believed that efforts should be made to conclude agreements for the limitation of production. He had not yet received any instructions from his Government concerning the draft French protocol. His Government would give careful examination to that proposal. In the meantime he could only express his personal view that the French proposal represented a great step forward and that the Commission should continue its efforts in that direction.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.