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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Eighth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 9 April 1953, at 10:50 a.m.

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PRESENT:

Chairman:

Mr. RABASA

Mexico

Rapporteur:

Mr. NIKOLIC

Yugoslavia

PRESENT: (continued)

<u>Members:</u>	Mr. SHARMAN	Canada
	Mr. CHI-KWEI LIANG	China
	Mr. EZZAT	Egypt
	Mr. VAILLE	France
	Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY	India
	Mr. ARDALAN	Iran
	Mr. KRUYSSSE	Netherlands
	Mrs. KOWALCZYK	Poland
	Mr. OR	Turkey
	Mr. ZONOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. WALKER	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. MORLOCK	United States of America

<u>Also present:</u>	Mr. GIRETTI	Observer for Italy
	Mr. van MUYDEN	Observer for Switzerland
	Mr. MAY	Permanent Central Opium Board

Representative of a specialized agency:

	Mr. WOLFF	World Health Organization (WHO)
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<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. HUANG	Division of Narcotic Drugs
	Mr. CELINSKI	Secretary of the Commission

APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE DRUG SUPERVISORY BODY (E/CN.7/250/Rev.1,
E/CN.7/250/Rev.1/Corr.1)

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to documents E/CN.7/250/Rev.1 and E/CN.7/250/Rev.1/Corr.1, and asked whether members wished to reaffirm the recommendation made by the Commission at its third session that the term of office of the member to be elected to the Drug Supervisory Body should be five years.

The Commission upheld its decision by 13 votes to none, with no abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN called for nominations and said that, in accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the election would be decided by secret ballot.

Mr. MORLOCK (United States of America) nominated Mr. Sharman (Canada), who had represented the Commission on the Drug Supervisory Body since 1948 in an able and efficient manner, for re-election to that body.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of Mexico, Mr. OR (Turkey) and Mr. VAILLE (France) supported that nomination.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Krishnamoorthy (India) and Mr. Or (Turkey) acted as tellers.

Number of ballot papers.....13

Invalid ballot..... 1

Number of valid ballots.....12

Number of valid votes cast.....12

Required majority..... 7

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Sharman (Canada)12

Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Sharman (Canada) was re-elected a member of the Drug Supervisory Body.

Mr. MAY (Permanent Central Opium Board), Mr. EZZAT (Egypt), the CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of Mexico, and Mr. OR (Turkey) congratulated Mr. Sharman on his re-election and paid a tribute to his competence as a member of the Supervisory Board.

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) thanked the members of the Commission for having re-elected him to the Drug Supervisory Body and said that he would do his best to continue to deserve their confidence.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF GOVERNMENTS MADE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 21 OF THE 1931 CONVENTION, AS AMENDED BY THE 1946 PROTOCOL (E/NR.1949/97, E/NR.1949/98, E/NR.1949/107-112, E/NR.1949/120; E/NR.1950/98, E/NR.1950/101, E/NR.1950/105-114; E/NR.1951/1-108, E/NR.1951/110-112; E/NR.1951/Summary)

Mr. VAILLE (France) drew attention to the blanks left in the annual reports for 1950 on Seychelles (E/NR.1950/28), the Gambia (E/NR.1950/69), Ruanda-Urundi (E/NR.1950/77), St. Vincent (E/NR.1950/79), Grenada (E/NR.1950/91), the Virgin Islands (E/NR.1950/100), and the annual report for 1951 on Ruanda-Urundi (E/NR.1951/51), and wondered whether it was not a waste of time to print such reports.

Referring to the annual report for 1951 submitted by the Government of Iran (E/NR.1951/68), he drew attention to the statement under section II A.1.c which seemed to conflict with the statement in Section V.1. He presumed that the former statement referred to drug addicts only. He wondered whether the treatment mentioned under Section XII was compulsory or voluntary.

Mr. ESFANDIARY (Iran) said that the French representative was correct in thinking that no narcotic drug had been confiscated from a drug addict in Iran during the period covered by the annual report for 1951. As regards the second question, any drug addict who so wished could obtain expert treatment in hospitals designated by the Government for that purpose.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the attention of Governments might be called to the need for giving all the information requested in the forms submitted to them.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) pointed out that the administrations of the countries mentioned in the French representative's statement were small and had a great deal of work to do. It frequently happened that there was no drug addiction or drug problem in those countries and the comments in their reports were therefore brief. He would, however, draw the attention of the administrations concerned to the remarks which had been made.

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) pointed out that under the heading "Laws and Regulations" the report for 1951 submitted by the Australian Government (E/NR.1951/45) stated that the use of heroin or any preparations thereof in any patent or proprietary medicines prepared for sale in the State of Victoria was prohibited. However, the Australian Government had stated in 1952, in correspondence between the Department of External Affairs at Canberra and the Drug Supervisory Body at Geneva, that the high consumption of heroin in Australia appeared to be due, among other causes, to (1) the consumption of reserve stocks, and (2) the extensive use of heroin and morphine in preparations and that, until the end of 1951, most States of Australia permitted the use of less than 0.1 per cent of heroin in preparations which were not controlled under State law. It had also been stated that as from 1 January 1952, the State of Victoria had prohibited the use of heroin in patent or proprietary medicines, while in Queensland and South Australia heroin or preparations containing heroin could not be supplied without a doctor's prescription. On the other hand, in New South Wales, where a large percentage of heroin preparations was manufactured, such preparations were still uncontrolled and the Commonwealth Government was not legally empowered to prevent such manufacture.

Australia was a signatory to the 1931 Convention and under article 15 undertook to take all necessary legislative or other measures in order to give effect within its territories to the provisions of that Convention.

As had been pointed out at previous sessions of the Commission, and confirmed by the Secretariat, the 1931 Convention contained no provisions or exemptions which permitted heroin to reach the public, either in pure form or mixed with other ingredients, except upon professional prescription. Similarly, the 1925 Convention did not exempt any type of heroin preparation from that requirement.

Australia was acting in complete good faith, but the statement that the Government of that country was not legally empowered to prevent the manufacture of a drug raised the point of that country's obligations under the Conventions. He referred more particularly to those preparations which reached the public without prescription rather than to the manufacture of such preparations.

He then quoted a report of a broadcast on the danger of inferior drugs (Radio-Australia News, 25 November 1952) which, in his opinion, showed that legislative difficulties were involved.

The situation as regards heroin was, however, not completely out of control, since the Federal Government of Australia, as the signatory to the 1931 Convention, issued licences for the importation of that drug into Australia and in addition was required under Article 10 of that Convention to furnish an official letter of request to the government of the country from which it was proposed to import, and to indicate the government department to which the drug was consigned.

In view of the fact that the Federal Government of Australia was at the present time making a detailed investigation of the high consumption of certain narcotic drugs, including heroin, within its borders, he thought the Commission might wish to draw that Government's attention to the necessity for ensuring that heroin did not reach the public, without professional prescription, in preparations which were not exempted from any such requirement under the terms of the international narcotic Conventions.

Mr. MAY (Permanent Central Opium Board) said that there had been an exchange of correspondence between the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Supervisory Body on the one hand and the Government of Australia on the other, concerning the matter just raised by the Canadian representative. However, as it was concerned with government legislation, the Narcotics Commission rather than the PCOB was the appropriate body to take action, if it thought fit to do so.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the section in the Summary of Annual Reports of Governments for 1951 which related to illicit traffic should be postponed until the Commission reached item 7 of its agenda which concerned that subject.

Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the section relating to illicit traffic in the summary of annual reports for 1951 contained a series of false and slanderous statements taken from the report submitted by the Kuomintang group, which were directed against the Chinese People's Republic

and the Soviet Union. As they were entirely groundless there was no point in refuting them. The Soviet Union continued to submit information to the appropriate bodies in accordance with the 1925 and 1931 Conventions. Similar charges had been made on earlier occasions and had been refuted by the USSR representatives in the Narcotics Commission and the Economic and Social Council, and elsewhere by the authorities of the Chinese People's Republic. Since its institution, that Republic had waged a determined campaign against opium smoking and narcotic drugs; regulations had been issued forbidding the smoking of opium and governing the control of drugs. Documents E/2233 of 22 May 1952 contained statements refuting the false charges of the Kuomintang group and others; he requested the Secretariat to have it circulated to all members of the Commission in the appropriate languages. Members of the Commission were also familiar with the statement from the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China contained in document SOA (109)(04) of 11 July 1952, which indicated the strict measures the Government had taken to suppress illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. In the opinion of the USSR delegation the Secretariat had committed a hostile act towards that Government in allowing slanderous statements of the kind to which he had referred to appear in United Nations documents. It therefore proposed that all such references should be deleted from E/NR.1951/Summary now before the Commission and that document E/NR.1951/101 should be removed from the records. The same should apply to the references to the smuggling into Japan of heroin alleged to have come from China (page 46 of E/NR.1951/Summary) and to other false statements contained in the sections of the document which summarized the reports on the United States and Hong Kong.

Mr. LIANG (China) announced his intention of speaking on the subject of illicit traffic when that item of the agenda came up for discussion but wished to state in the meantime that the reports from the National Government of China were correct.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) proposed that, in accordance with the Chairman's suggestion, discussion of all matters relating to illicit traffic should be postponed until agenda item 7 was reached. In the meantime, however,

he wished to ask whether the Secretariat had any right to refuse to circulate a report submitted by a signatory to the current Conventions. Concerning the USSR representative's reference to the section on Hong Kong in the 1951 summary, he was unable to trace any slanderous remarks relating to the People's Republic of China in that section.

Mr. HUANG (Secretariat), replying to the United Kingdom representative, said that, under article 21 of the 1931 Convention, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was required to communicate the reports in question to the parties to the Convention.

Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), answering the United Kingdom representative, said that the deletion he had proposed related to references to Chinese territory in the section of the summary which concerned Hong Kong.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that he would answer that point when the agenda item on illicit traffic was discussed.

The CHAIRMAN announced that he would put to the vote the United Kingdom representative's proposal to postpone any discussion on illicit traffic until item 7 was considered by the Commission.

Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that his proposal had priority as it related to the deletion of parts of a document which was now being discussed by the Commission. He would participate in the discussion on illicit traffic when that item came before the Commission.

Mrs. KOWALCZYK (Poland) supported the observations made by the USSR representative. As he had indicated, the Central People's Government of the Chinese People's Republic had taken comprehensive measures to suppress opium smoking and had nationalized the production of narcotic drugs in order to control them. In doing so, it had acted in accordance with the desires of the Chinese people who had long suffered from the policies of the Japanese aggressors

and the Kuomintang group which had allowed profits to be made on the sale of opium and done nothing to prevent its evil effects upon the population. The passages from the Summary of Annual Reports for 1951 to which the USSR representative had referred seriously detracted from the importance of that document.

The CHAIRMAN acknowledged the fact that the USSR proposal related to a document now before the Commission but pointed out that in approving its agenda, the Commission had decided to have a separate item for the question of illicit traffic. In accordance with that decision, his ruling was that the United Kingdom proposal should be put to the vote first.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) understood that the issue now before the Commission was one of procedure and would not prejudice the right of members to discuss any points raised in connexion with illicit traffic when that subject came up for discussion.

The CHAIRMAN said the Indian representative's understanding was correct.

Mr. ZONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) challenged the Chairman's ruling. His proposal was that the references he had mentioned should be deleted before document E/NR.1951/Summary was discussed. Their deletion or retention would affect his vote on the document as a whole; his proposal should therefore be considered first.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the USSR representative's challenge to the ruling of the Chair.

The USSR representative's challenge to the ruling of the Chair was rejected by 10 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN explained that he had abstained from voting because he had felt that it would be inappropriate for him to participate in a vote on a challenge to his ruling.

He put to the vote the United Kingdom proposal that the question of deleting certain parts of the summary (E/NR.1951/Summary) should be postponed until the Commission discussed the chapter on illicit traffic in conjunction with item 7.

The United Kingdom proposal was adopted by 11 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) said he had abstained from voting on the United Kingdom proposal because as formulated prior to the voting it referred not only to the postponement of the discussion of the chapter on illicit traffic but also to the USSR proposal to make certain deletions in the document and therefore to be consistent with his vote on the challenge to the Chairman's ruling he had been compelled to abstain from voting on the United Kingdom proposal.

In reply to Mr. VAILLE (France), the CHAIRMAN said that the summary of annual reports of Governments (E/NR.1951/Summary) would be discussed chapter by chapter.

Laws and Publications

In reply to Mr. VAILLE (France), the CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat had received no further information with regard to Pakistani legislation in respect of opium smoking.

In reply to Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia), the CHAIRMAN said that Ireland had deposited an instrument of acceptance of the 1948 Protocol with the Secretariat on 11 August 1952.

Administration

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) said that there was one point in connexion with the United Kingdom report which was not mentioned in the summary. In the report, United Kingdom exports of narcotic drugs were listed by countries except in the case of Australia where its exports were given according to the individual provinces of Australia importing the drugs. That point was particularly interesting to him in view of his previous remarks on the situation

in Australia. He assumed that the import licences for narcotic drugs were signed by the Federal Government of Australia, that is to say, the Government of the country, Party to the Convention concerned.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that it had been the practice for some time to list such exports to Australia by provinces. He would however inquire further into the situation. It was his impression that a letter of recommendation was issued by the Australian Government but he did not know who signed the actual import certificate.

Drug Addiction

Mr. VAILLE (France) drew attention to the summary of the United Kingdom report stating that during 1951 seizures of hemp had shown an increase over the previous years, that the majority of hemp users appeared to be between 20 and 30 years of age and that addiction to synthetic drugs was increasing. He cited in that connexion the percentage of addicts using pethidine and diacetylmorphine as well as the figures for addicts using methadone and phenadoxone. He wondered whether there had been any changes in the situation.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that during 1952 seizures of hemp had continued to occur but had shown a slight decrease. There had been no significant change in the age of persons addicted to hemp or in the number of persons addicted to synthetic drugs. He pointed out that synthetic drug addicts accounted for a very small part of the total and consequently an increase or decrease of one or two addicts to synthetic drugs would be reflected by a deceptive change in the percentage figure.

In reply to Mr. VAILLE (France), Mr. SHARMAN (Canada) said that the figures for young persons addicted to narcotics in Canada had remained approximately the same in 1952 as they had been in 1951.

In reply to Mr. EZZAT (Egypt), the CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Mexico, said that in Mexico marihuana addicts were subjected to treatment involving not gradual but total disintoxication followed by a period of intensive nutrition. Persons addicted to alkaloids, however, were subjected to gradual disintoxication.

Mr. VAILLE (France) drew attention to the commendably frank statement in the summary of the Indonesian report (page 21) which stated that "in view of the meagre results obtained in the treatment of addicts in the country, the fight against addiction may be called past hope, and the only hope seems to lie in combating the illicit traffic, for which the co-operation of all countries is required". That statement clearly showed how important it was for all countries to participate wholeheartedly in combating the traffic.

Turning to the summary of the report on Aden (page 22), he expressed surprise at the situation which it described. Apparently the use of narcotic drugs was legal in that territory. He wondered whether opium smoking was also permitted.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) thought that certain persons were probably authorized to obtain narcotic drugs from a licenced dealer in connexion with medical care.

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the statement on Aden appearing on page 86 of the summary (E/MR.1951/summary) which stated that "opium smoking is not prohibited. The importation and sale of opium and dangerous drugs is controlled by the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, 1942. Opium is imported only by the Government in quantities which will suffice to meet the needs of addicts as permitted by the Director of Medical Services. The retail price of opium is fixed by the Government; there is only one licenced dealer."

Mr. EZZAT (Egypt) questioned the wording of the first paragraph of the summary of the Indonesian report (page 21) which stated that "Most of the addicts were over 35 years of age, and the annual report points out that, notwithstanding their habit of smoking opium for decades, many of them attain a ripe old age." That might be construed as an argument in favour of opium smoking.

Mr. VAILLE (France) noted the figures in the summary of the report of the Japanese Government on addiction among young persons. He wondered what WHO's views were on youthful addicts and whether there was any explanation for their addiction.

Mr. WOLFF (World Health Organization) said he had the impression that at the present time increasing attention was being paid to the use of drugs by young persons. Disappointing reports on the situation had been published in the last few years particularly in the United States. In that country the situation appeared to have improved as a result of energetic legal and therapeutic measures taken promptly by that Government to meet the threat. In addition to the fact that Governments were giving more attention to the problem and that more data were now being reported, the situation had also been affected by the Second World War, which had increased the difficulties of youth in adjusting to their environment and at times had resulted in a decrease in the standards of education.

He was optimistic about the situation inasmuch as effective measures for combating the evil were known to Governments which, if taken, would bring about an improvement in the situation. He pointed out that a similar problem had arisen as the aftermath of World War I. It was essential however that measures should be taken promptly if results were to be achieved and he doubted whether heretofore all Governments had acted with sufficient speed and energy.

With regard to the general question of treatment he pointed out that many reports erroneously described as "treatment" procedures which could only be described as the first steps in a programme of treatment. It was essential to remember that the process of disintoxication was only the beginning of treatment. It could be brought about gradually - which for many reasons was not the most desirable way - or without delay, if the physical condition of the patient permitted. The essential treatment for an addict, however, was psychotherapy, which was very costly and in most instances required individual care. Some attempt at mass treatment had been made, but that was possible only in certain conditions. In his view a course of treatment over a period of six months would be the most satisfactory. The United States was currently achieving much better results than it had two decades earlier, chiefly as a result of the specialized hospitals which had been established for the treatment of drug addicts, where the patients received both individual and mass psychotherapy.

He drew attention to the distinction between the word "cure" and the word "treatment". In his view a drug addict could be called cured only if he had been free from drug addiction for a period of not less than three years. Even

at that stage he would be inclined to call him only potentially cured. As in most instances, however, the data concerning treatment given in the annual reports of Governments referred only to the disintoxication of the patient, he thought they did not represent a therapeutic result.

Mr. MORLOCK (United States of America) said that further information on the situation in the United States with regard to addiction among young persons would appear in the 1952 annual report.

Control of International Trade

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) drew attention to the fact that the summary of the reports from Denmark, Indonesia and Greece contained information on imports and exports which did not in his view properly relate to the control of international trade and while useful might more appropriately have been inserted elsewhere in the report.

Mr. HUANG (Secretariat) agreed that the section on the control of international trade in the 1949 form of annual reports contained no question on quantities of narcotic drugs imported or exported. On the contrary, the chapter dealt mainly with the organization and operation of control machinery, namely, the authorities issuing import and export certificates and the like. Many annual reports, however, did not give any information on those points.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) saw the Secretariat's difficulty but still felt that information on imports and exports should be inserted elsewhere in the summary.

Mr. VAILLE (France) referred to the statement on the diversion of drugs in 1951. Four thousand ampoules of Dolosal, a trade name for pethidine, had been ordered from France, but only 3,200 ampoules had been received, the rest having disappeared between Marseilles and Saigon. The police had investigated the case and had discovered the lost drugs at Djibouti. The thieves, who had stolen a case of medicaments had been unaware of the value of their loot as neither they nor the person receiving the stolen goods had realized

that narcotic drugs were contained in the case, despite the special labels on the packages. The ampoules had been recovered by the police.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) thought that the case related to illicit national traffic and should be inserted under that chapter.

Mr. VAILLE (France) pointed out that originally it had been a matter of licit trade between nations. When the report was made, the authorities had not known what had happened to the 800 ampoules lost en route, and it was for that reason that the information had been included under the chapter on control of international trade.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

22/4 a.m.