

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Communicated to the
Council and the Members
of the League.

C.109.M.109.1945.XI
(O.C./A.R.1944/39)
(Issued in English only)

Geneva, October 22nd, 1945

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

ANNUAL REPORTS BY GOVERNMENTS FOR 1944.

C A N A D A.

Note by the Acting Secretary-General.

In accordance with Article 21 of the Convention of 1931 for limiting the Manufacture and regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs, the Acting Secretary-General has the honour to communicate the above-mentioned report to the parties to the Convention. The report is also communicated to other States and to the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.

(For the form of annual reports, see document O.C.1600).

A. GENERAL.

I. Laws and Publications.

On July 24th, 1944, Royal Assent was given to an Act establishing a Department of National Health and Welfare, to which the Narcotic Division was assigned.

On August 8th, 1944, an Order-in-Council was passed amending the Regulations Respecting the Sale and Use of Codeine as originally promulgated in September 1939.

II. Administration.

1. The Narcotic Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare continues to be the "Special Administration" for the control of narcotic matters in Canada.

2. Addiction to Codeine is still encountered in Canada, but the Regulations limiting the sale and use of this drug and preparations containing same, to a prescription basis have materially assisted in rendering control effective.

The scarcity of Smoking Opium and its resultant high prices have undoubtedly caused the habit of injecting Smoking Opium hypodermically to remain at a very low level. Cases have again been encountered of addicts obtaining, by misrepresentation, prescriptions from physicians and veterinary surgeons for Tincture of Opium and Sweet Oils, which can be easily separated, and a number of convictions for illegal possession of Opium, and, uttering forged prescriptions, in relation thereto were obtained. There were only two cases where addicts obtained Galls and Opium Ointment, the ingredients of which can be separated with comparative ease.

III. Control of International Trade.

1. Having due regard to war conditions, the import and export licence system continues to function satisfactorily.

2. Nil.

3. Nil.

4. Undoubtedly due to shipping and war conditions generally, the return of Export Authorisation Certificates, particularly from the British West Indies, takes somewhat longer than usual, otherwise conditions remained normal.

5. Nil.

6. Nil.

7. No such trade.

8. Nil.

IV. International Co-operation.

1. None.

2. The usually highly satisfactory co-operation with other countries, particularly Great Britain and the United States continues.

V. Illicit Traffic.

During 1944 brown Heroin, believed to be of Mexican origin at least insofar as the Opium base is concerned, was encountered in Canada.

Our experience in relation to Opium from abroad duplicated that of the United States in that Opium, believed to be of both Indian and Iranian origin, was encountered upon a number of occasions on vessels arriving in Canadian ports from Great Britain and elsewhere.

A large proportion of the narcotics used by addicts was obtained from the legitimate trade by such criminal means as burglary, armed hold-ups, the forgery of prescriptions, etc. The Underworld price of such narcotics continued, on the Pacific Coast, for example, at \$20. per grain, or \$8,750 per ounce, as compared with the lawful price approximating \$10 per ounce in retail drug stores. Such a huge disparity continued to interest a large number of professional, non-addict criminals who systematically blew safes, or burglarised drug stores and hospitals, finding such activities more remunerative, and possibly less risky, than robbing a bank. Others systematically robbed doctors' offices and bags, although this class of crime came more particularly within the orbit of the addicted petty thief. Many heavy sentences were imposed by the Courts in relation to this type of crime. In one instance a sentence of six years' imprisonment and ten lashes was imposed in relation to the armed hold-up of a retail drug store.

During the twelve month period there were 230 successful thefts and 80 unsuccessful attempts to steal narcotics, as compared with 289 and 70 in the preceding year as follows:

	<u>Thefts</u>	<u>Attempted Thefts</u>
Wholesalers	9	6
Retail Druggists	92	38
Physicians	93	32
Hospitals	30	4
Military hospitals and airports	6	-
	<u>230</u>	<u>80</u>

There were 165 convictions under the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act as compared with 104 in the previous year. 140 of these were for illegal possession, such possession being frequently in circumstances known to be related to both trafficking and thefts from legitimate sources. There were 3 convictions of professional men (2 physicians and 1 veterinary surgeon) as compared with 4 in the preceding year.

In addition there were 9 convictions under the War Measures Act Regulation, one of which involved a retail druggist, and 4 convictions for conspiracy under the Criminal Code.

Of the 165 convictions under the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act, 152 involved jail or penitentiary sentences ranging from six months to six years. The racial origins were,

British and American	131
Chinese	28
Italian	2
Russian	2
Greek	2

In the cases relating to possession and trafficking, the drugs involved were :

Smoking Opium	17
Opium Poppy heads	5
Poppy head tea	5
Opium in other forms	6
Morphine	77
Heroin	22
Cocaine	13

The quantities of narcotics received from illicit channels were,

	<u>lbs.</u>	<u>oz.</u>	<u>gr.</u>
Prepared Opium	7	14	126
Prepared Opium seconds	-	11	229
Raw Opium	-	2	62
Opium water	4	1	299
Opium seconds water	-	15	-
Tincture of Opium	5	10	119
Opium powder	-	7	315
Morphine (pure)	-	9	43
Cocaine (pure)	-	2	377

(Continued)

	<u>Lbs.</u>	<u>Oz.</u>	<u>Gr.</u>
Heroin pure	-	2	233
Poppy heads	11	5	-
Poppy head tea	12	11	-
Cannabis Tincture	-	6	-
Codeine	-	3	179
Alleged drugs	-	10	68

Marihuana gave very little trouble. Its uncultivated growth was encountered upon three occasions, all of which were disposed of by the destruction of the weed.

There was a considerable increase in the use of Opium. Poppy heads and the tea infused therefrom. This situation, from the administrative standpoint, is complicated by the fact that numerous people, usually immigrants from Central Europe where the growth of the Opium Poppy for culinary purposes as also for the production of oil is very common, continued such cultivation in Canada. In all such instances, there was cooperation on the part of those concerned and an obvious absence of illegal intent. Such cases were disposed of by the destruction of the plant and acceptance of an undertaking not to repeat such cultivation. In the remaining cases where illicit activity was obvious, prosecutions were entered.

No Chinese medicines containing narcotics were encountered, although the comparatively small imports thereof were analysed before release from Customs.

No trouble was encountered in relation to racetrack traffic. Saliva tests were taken at a large number of race meets, but in no instance was a reaction to a narcotic obtained. There was, however, an occasional instance of stimulation by other means, including benzedrine, adrenalin and rectal injection of ginger and oil. In such cases appropriate action was taken by the racing authorities.

War conditions rendered it impossible to effect the deportation of a considerable number of aliens with overseas destinations, after serving terms of imprisonment for breaches of the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act. These are temporarily remaining in Canada under bond with the Immigration Department. However, 4 Chinese and 2 United States citizens were deported, bringing to 1,317 the total number of aliens deported under Canadian narcotic legislation.

VI. Other Information.

Nil.

B. RAW MATERIALS.

VII. Raw Opium.

1. Nil
2. Nil.
3. Nil
4. Nil.

(Raw Opium Continued).

5. (a) Nil

(b) There were 122 licensed narcotic wholesalers in 1944, one of whom imported Raw Opium. This firm, in turn, sells to other licensed narcotic wholesalers. All transactions are reported monthly to the Narcotic Division, and subsequently audited.

6. Nil

7.(a) Nil.

(b) Nil.

VIII. Coca Leaf.

1. Nil.

2. Nil.

3. Nil.

4.(a) Nil.

(b) As previously stated, there were 122 licensed narcotic wholesalers in Canada, some of whom are licensed to import, and all to sell to one another. All transactions are reported to the Narcotic Division and subsequently audited. No Coca Leaves were imported during the year.

5. Nil

IX. Indian Hemp.

1. Cannabis was encountered growing on 9 premises in three provinces during the year 1944. As production is illegal in Canada, the plants where found growing, were destroyed.

2. Nil.

3. (a) Nil.

(b) Stocks on hand of wholesalers at the end of 1944, amounted to 145 Kg. 519 Gr.

4. See 1.

5.(a) No.

(b) Nil.

6. Nil.

7. The illicit importation of Indian Hemp in the form of Marihuana, and the possession thereof, being illegal, arrests follow. During the year, there were no convictions for illicit cultivation of Marihuana. There is no known export.

8. Nil.

C. MANUFACTURED DRUGS.

X. Internal Control of Manufactured Drugs.

1. (a) Canada does not manufacture.

(b) As stated in previous reports, Canada does not export Diacetylmorphine or preparations containing same. All Diacetylmorphine entering Canada is consigned to the Department of National Health and Welfare; taken possession of by representatives at Customs, and then delivered personally to a licensed narcotic wholesaler. Any Import Licence for Diacetylmorphine issued is also accompanied by a request to the Government of the exporting country to permit such exportation.

(c) The provisions of Articles 13 and 14 of the 1931 Convention are being strictly complied with.

2. Licences.

(a) No licences were issued in Canada for the manufacture or refining of drugs.

(b) Annual Licences were issued to 122 wholesalers, some of whom import straight narcotics and preparations. They all supply same to those authorised under the Canadian Opium and Narcotic Drug Act, viz: other wholesalers, retail druggists, physicians, dentists and veterinary surgeons. All transactions are reported monthly to the Narcotic Division, and, in addition, wholesalers' books and transactions are audited by two Narcotic Auditors, both of whom are employees of the Department, and who are chemists.

Before a licence to deal in narcotics is granted, full enquiry is made as to the standing of the person or firm concerned, as also the suitability and security of the premises upon which they operate.

3. Manufacture.

(a) No factories were authorised to manufacture straight narcotic drugs.

(b) No new drugs were developed.

(c) The premises of all narcotic wholesalers are inspected and their books audited, which includes the taking of stock and the checking of all transactions before a balance is arrived at. This enables points (1), (2), (3) and (4) to be thoroughly taken care of.

(5) If, as sometimes happens, owing to an unexplained shortage or surplus in a wholesalers' stock, and analysis of a finished product or preparation (such as Tincture of Opium) is desirable, the analysis is carried out by a Dominion Analyst of the Department.

Raw material entering Canada, i.e., Raw Opium, is accompanied by a certificate of analysis from the exporting country, signed by an analyst previously approved by the Department.

The morphine content, as shown in the certificate of analysis, is entered in the books of the importer, and each subsequent transaction in Canada in relation to each importation is in terms of such morphine content which is entered in the books of each purchaser, and taken into account at the next Governmental audit.

4. Trade and Distribution.

(a) One hundred and twenty-two firms held wholesale narcotic licences in 1944. Of that number, 63 manufactured preparations for wholesale trade, and, in common with the others, sold direct to retail druggists, physicians, etc.

(b) The method of audit and verification of books, stocks, etc., of wholesalers is as outlined in 3(c). Every retail drug store, in addition to furnishing periodical sales reports, is regularly inspected, the special narcotic register and prescriptions examined, and balance taken. Any omissions or irregularities discovered are usually susceptible of adjustment by correspondence, but power to prosecute is available under the Narcotic Act, and is made use of. The Department is also in frequent correspondence with physicians, dentists, etc., who are required, by law, when called upon, to furnish details as to the use to which narcotics made available to them have been put.

Narcotics in possession of wholesalers have to be kept in an approved vault or safe, frequently with electric alarm protection; those in retail drug stores are required to be kept securely under lock and key.

D. OTHER QUESTIONS.

XI. Chapter IV of the Hague Convention of 1912.

Nil.

XII. Prepared Opium.

1. (a) Opium smoking among the national population is negligible.

Reference to the habit of injecting Smoking Opium hypodermically has already been made in this report.

(b) There were no convictions for Opium Smoking during 1944. The habit of Opium Smoking (mostly involving Chinese) has greatly decreased, as will be seen in table following.

The principal reasons for the decrease in Opium smoking are (1) the heavy cost of illicit Opium in Canada, and (2) the minimum sentence of six months and a fine of \$200.00, with deportation for aliens, for the illegal possession of Opium together with a minimum fine of \$50.00 for the possession of an Opium Pipe or other paraphernalia, or for frequenting an Opium den.

2. No particular difficulty is encountered in combatting Opium smoking, and the practice is constantly watched for. When found, prosecution invariably follows. The illicit introduction of Opium by means of Chinese crews on ships arriving at Atlantic Ports continues to be encountered. It is scarce, high in price, and many former smokers are not now using it. Convictions for offences in connection with Opium smoking, in the past fourteen years, have been as follows:

Year	Opium Smoking	Frequenting Opium Dens	Illegal Possession of Pipes	Total
1931	42	39	24	105
1932	14	34	17	65
1933	17	42	24	83
1934	8	44	26	78
1935	11	18	13	42
1936	9	14	11	34
1937	-	5	5	10
1938	1	3	4	8
1939	1	1	1	3
1940	-	1	2	3
1941	-	2	-	2
1942	-	-	1	1
1943	3	-	-	3
1944	-	-	12	12
	106	203	140	449

For penalties imposed see V.

3.	Prepared Opium seized :	<u>Kg.</u>	<u>Gr.</u>
		3	579
	Opium Dross seized:	-	326

4. All seized narcotics are destroyed by fire.

XIII. Other Drugs.

See V.