

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Communicated to the
Council and the Members
of the League.

C.9.M.9.1946.XI.
(O.C./A.R.1944/52.)
(Issued in English only).

Geneva, January 21st, 1946.

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

ANNUAL REPORTS BY GOVERNMENTS FOR 1944.

PALESTINE.

Communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom.

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.

1. No new legislation was issued during the year.

In September, 1942, the Dangerous Drugs (Addition to Schedule) Notice, 1942, was issued.

2. The issue of this Notice brings Procain Hydrochloride within the meaning of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, 1936, the object being to combat the increasing smuggling into Palestine of Procain and its sale as cocaine through illicit channels.

3. There are no publications, official or unofficial, likely to be of interest to the Advisory Committee.

II. Administration.

1. Administration was detailed in this Government's report for the calendar year 1936. (x)

(x) Note by the Secretariat:

See document C.373.M.251.1937.XI. (O.C./A.R.1936/7).

2. Narcotic addiction does not constitute a serious problem in Palestine. The number of addicts is small. The market for narcotic drugs is limited. The most common of such drugs are hashish and opium. There is no indication of any appreciable illegal local trade in white drugs, though this trade has made a re-appearance.

III. Control of International Trade.

1. The system of import certificates and export authorisations for the control of opium and other dangerous drugs was fully detailed in this Government's report for the calendar year 1936.(x) This system worked satisfactorily and no difficulties were encountered.

2. The Director of Medical Service remains the competent authority for issuing import certificates, export authorisations, diversion or transit certificates, and no modifications have been made regarding the conditions of issue of such certificates.

3. The system of import certificates in respect of heroin in accordance with the requirements of the Convention of 1931, was detailed in this Government's report for the calendar year 1936.(x)

4. All copies of export authorisations received from exporting countries were duly returned in accordance with Article 13(5) of the Geneva Convention of 1925.

5. No case of forged or falsified import certificates or export authorisations came to the knowledge of the Government during the year.

6. No difficulties have arisen with regard to transit transshipment, and diversion, or with regard to free ports, free zones, and bonded warehouses.

7. No import or export transaction took place during the year with countries which have not adopted the system of import or export certificates.

8. See under B.IK. below.

IV. International co-operation.

1. No international treaty or agreement was concluded during the year.

2. Close liaison is maintained with narcotic authorities in Syria and Egypt, and military authorities have co-operated to the fullest extent. Cases involving military personnel were dealt with by Courts Martial and sentences of deterrent nature were imposed.

(x) Note by the Secretariat:

See document C.373.M.251.1937.XI.(O.C./A.R.1936/7).

V. Illicit Traffic.

1. The number of seizures of narcotic drugs during the year shows a further decrease below the figures for previous years. There has been a decrease of 61% in seizures of hashish, which is counterbalanced by an increase of 142% in opium seizures. The drug traffic in Palestine is almost wholly in transit, chiefly to Egypt. The sources of hashish and opium seized within Palestine and on importation into the country are Lebanon and Syria. No special markings were noted to indicate the origin of the drugs seized, but it is believed they were of clandestine production.

The overland road or rail routes are mostly followed; but with clearance of the enemy from the Eastern Mediterranean and the coastal traffic resuming normality, the drug traffickers have not been slow in taking advantage of a means of transport which lessens the risk of detection. The method most frequently used by smugglers is to conceal the drug in petrol tins and bodies of cars.

3. The number of cases investigated under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance during the year was 191, which is 90 cases less than in 1943. Convictions were obtained in 102 cases involving 116 individuals, and at the end of the year there were 56 cases awaiting trial involving 78 individuals. 51 persons were deported during the year to neighbouring Arab countries after having served a term of imprisonment for drug trafficking or drug addiction.

4. One of the cases of interest during the year is the following::

On March 4th, 1944 it was learned that 4 Palestinians in Syria had approached 2 Army mail-car drivers to transport a large consignment of drugs from Zahle, Syria to Gaza. Palestine Police, S.I.B. and the British Security Mission cooperate, and the traffickers were informed that a mail-car would be leaving 5 days later, the driver of which would be willing to assist them. On March 9th, 1944 the truck picked up a load of faked mail and then collected the drugs which were contained in 6 sacks. Hamed Ahmed Khalil Abu Baraki of Beni Suheil, who was to deliver the drugs, travelled in the rear of the truck. The driver was instructed to collect a packing case in Jerusalem for transportation to Gaza. At Jerusalem, Baraki was dropped outside the military camp and the truck entered to pick up the packing case, which contained two police officers equipped with a portable wireless transmitter. Baraki was collected again outside the camp and the truck proceeded on its way. Nearing Gaza the two police officers started transmitting their position from their place of concealment to a flying squad car patrolling in the vicinity. Delivery was made to a house in Beni Suheil. Baraki and 4 men of Beni Suheil who were taking delivery of the 180 kilogrammes of hashish were arrested by the police officers who stepped from the box. The Flying Squad arrived a few minutes later. The case is still awaiting trial.

5. The total seizures of narcotic drugs for the year were 1031 kilogrammes of hashish, 691 kilogrammes of opium and 246 grammes of cocaine.

6. There are four grades of hashish sold in Palestine. They are Zahra, Capsh, Brinji and Ikinji. Prices, which were formerly approximately LP.10, LP.6, LP.4 and LP.2 per kilogramme respectively, have risen to unprecedented heights due to the drastic destruction of the Lebanese and Syrian hashish crops.

VI. Other Information, including any suggestions which might be useful either to the Advisory Committee on Traffic of Opium or to Government.

Nothing to report or suggest.

B. RAW MATERIALS.

VII. Raw opium.

Nothing to report. The opium poppy is not cultivated and the manufacture, possession and importation of raw opium is prohibited.

VIII. Coca leaf.

Nothing to report. The coca leaf is not cultivated and its possession and importation into Palestine are prohibited.

IX. Indian hemp.

Nothing to report. The plant is not cultivated in Palestine, and the possession, manufacture, and importation of Indian hemp is prohibited in Palestine.

C. MANUFACTURED DRUGS.

X. Internal control of manufactured drugs.

This was fully detailed in this Government's annual report on Dangerous Drugs for the year 1936. (x)

D. OTHER QUESTIONS.

XI. Chapter IV of the Hague Opium Convention of 1912.

Nothing to report.

XII. Prepared opium.

Prepared opium is not known in Palestine; its importation, manufacture, preparation and possession are prohibited.

XIII. Other drugs.

Nothing to report.

Note by the Secretariat:

See document C.373.M.251.1937.XI. (O.C./A.R.1936/7).