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Remarks of Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Jr. - Michigan

January 11, 1955

Mr. Speaker:

Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold of the United Nations has before him a recommendation of the Third Committee at the U. N. to transfer the United Nations' Narcotics Division from New York to Geneva. This proposal is clearly not in the best interests of the United States, the United Nations, or of the effective control of the illicit narcotics traffic.

The reasons for suggesting the transfer to Geneva are shrouded in deep political mystery. There are many offices or divisions of the U. N. which could be taken out of this country. Why was the Narcotics Division selected? This is all the more strange when one realizes that President Eisenhower recently appointed a special Inter-departmental committee to review and coordinate the Federal government's programs to combat narcotic addiction in this country. In a letter from the White House to Secretary Humphrey, dated November 27, 1954, the President said, "Receipt of the



Committee's report on both subjects (to define more clearly the scope of the problems which we face and to promote effective cooperation among Federal, State, and local agencies) as promptly as possible will expedite systematic review and improvement of our narcotics programs--local, national and international."

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that it would be most unwise for the Secretary-General to effect this transfer, and a grave mistake to do it before the President's committee has an opportunity to report. Our most effective work in combating this terrible evil may call for an energetic international office in this country. To eliminate at this time the New York Division of the U. N. with its specialized laboratory could be disastrous. The United States for years has been the world leader in opposition to the illicit dope traffic. Right now the problem is as serious as ever. "Recognizing this the American Legion, Department of California, through its Commander, Mr. Malcolm M. Champlin wrote Mr. Hammarksjold on December 2, 1954 as follows:



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"e wish to protest this move on the grounds that the United States has a serious narcotic problem which is due entirely to the international illicit traffic, and that there are many international narcotic treaties being administered by the United Nations in New York which attempt to stop the smuggling of narcotics from abroad to the State of California.

We, therefore, consider it vitally important to retain at the United Nations headquarters in New York its Narcotic Division in order to maintain close cooperation with the United States, which is one of the most important victim countries of this traffic. We feel that the transfer to Geneva will result in a psychological defeat for your narcotic program, and we predict that if this transfer goes through it will result in a decided lessening of international narcotic controls."



It is quite evident that the transfer of the Narcotic Division to Geneva would remove it from the watchful eye of American newspapermen and that its efforts would receive less news coverage. Likewise, it will be removed from a country which is vitally interested in the strictest control of narcotics.

The man probably most interested in this problem, Commissioner of Narcotics H. J. Anslinger, wrote me on December 30, 1954, to say, "We are not in favor of this transfer."

The recent Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Honorable Alexander Wiley, has been deeply concerned with this proposed transfer. On November 9, 1954, he wrote our Ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, saying, "I cannot help but feel that in view of the fact that the preponderant effect on narcotics research and on enforcement effort against worldwide illicit traffic is made by the United States, that the Division should definitely be kept here in this country."



I certainly hope that the Secretary-General will give considerable weight to the opinion of these distinguished gentleman. In fighting this international evil the U. N. needs the complete cooperation and assistance of the United States and the United States needs the same from the United Nations. This mutual cooperation and assistance will not be increased by moving the U. N. Narcotics Division to Geneva.

Not only does this proposed transfer come at a time when the President's interdepartmental committee is at work, but it follows shortly on the return of Clement Attlee from Red China. The France-Turkey-United Kingdom resolution passed in Committee Three seems to have resulted from some of the information Mr. Attlee obtained on his visit. We should insist that nothing be done by the U. N. which would in any way increase the influence of Red China either in the U. N. or in the world at large. We in the United States must be alert to any effort by the Chinese Communists to decrease the effectiveness of international control of the illicit narcotic traffic. Not only are the lives of our children and young people involved, but also those of many other enlightened nations of the world.



Some will say that this is an economy measure, and that money will be saved by building a laboratory in Geneva and transferring all narcotic work to the Switzerland city. This claim cannot stand close scrutiny. It will take many years to amortize the additional cost, estimated at \$25,000 required for moving to Geneva.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would urge that Secretary-General Hammarhjold exercise his prerogative to keep the Narcotics Division in New York. We cannot risk weakening an effective weapon against an international enemy; we don't want to endanger the lives of potential victims of the vicious dope peddlers by neglecting to protest this move. I ask my colleagues to urge the Secretary-General to keep this Division in New York. We want to see nothing done which will weaken the power of the U. N., or which will cause the people of the United States to be less enthusiastic in their support of the United Nations.



Extension of Remarks of Rep. Gerald R. Ford, Jr. - Michigan

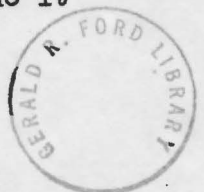
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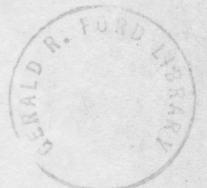
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