

The original documents are located in Box 118, folder “Drugs” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

December 18, 1974

JACK ANDERSON/POPPIES

BACKGROUND: Wednesday's Jack Anderson column refers to a "secret White House document (which) recommends **growing poppies for narcotic production.**" FYI, the document deals primarily with a recommendation to authorize the importation of poppy straw extract in addition to opium gun, because of a projected shortage of opium gun in 1975. This decision will be announced Wednesday or Thursday by the Justice Department.

(Q & A ATTACHED)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the Opium Policy Task Force? A task force including officials of the Drug Enforcement Administration (Justice), National Institute on Drug Abuse (HEW), Department of Agriculture, State Department, Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention (White House), General Services Administration, and Office of Management and Budget. It has existed for almost two years and has been responsible for ensuring that domestic supplies of opiate-based drugs -- principally codeine -- are adequate to meet medical needs. Ed Johnson of OMB is the Chairman.
2. Has the Task Force recommended domestic growth of poppies? No, it has not, and there has been no change in our traditional policy of relying on overseas sources to meet our medicinal needs. The "papaver bracteatum" mentioned in Mr. Anderson's column is a promising potential substitute for the traditional opium poppy (papaver somniferum) because it appears to offer less potential of abuse, but a great deal of agricultural and pharmacological research must be completed before any decisions can be made. This research is now underway in over one dozen countries around the world, including the United States, under the leadership of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs.
3. Is there a shortage of medicinal codeine? Not now, and current projections are that there will be worldwide sufficiency in 1975. However, while the UN and we project worldwide sufficiency, the U. S. may face a temporary shortage because of our exclusive reliance on opium gum in face of a shifting trend to the poppy straw process of extraction (which we support). The Task Force is aware of this potential problem and is working to ensure that no temporary shortage develops.

Some items in this folder were not digitized because it contains copyrighted materials. Please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library for access to these materials.

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

THE WASHINGTON POST Wednesday, Dec. 18, 1974 E11

U.S. Eyes Poppy-Growing for Drugs

By Jack Anderson

cines, often taken by youngsters for narcotic kicks. . . . ity, he said. Once a photogra- . . . to write Secretary of State

Drugs

MARCH 5, 1975

SUBJECT: GROWTH OF OPIUM POPPY IN THE U.S.?

- Q. A number of recent press accounts have speculated about the possibility of growth of opium poppy in the United States. Would you please comment on this?
- A. Our policy of continuing to rely on foreign sources for raw materials to make codeine and morphine for medical purposes remains unchanged. The recent regulation issued by the Department of Justice permitting the importation of concentrate of poppy straw should enable our manufacturers to continue to find sufficient supplies overseas. This policy of reliance on overseas manufacturers has recently been stated publicly by Dr. Robert DuPont, Director of the President's Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention and by Ambassador Sheldon Vance, Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control.

There has also been speculation concerning the possible growth of papaver bracteatum, a perennial poppy which does not produce the conventional opium gum, but is an alternative source for codeine. However, as discussed at length at the American Medical Association conference on March 3 and 4, there are a great number of questions concerning bracteatum which must be answered before any decision can be made.

Hearings being conducted by the Juvenile Delinquency Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee (Chairman Birch Bayh) should help illuminate this entire issue.

JGC

September 26, 1975

WHITE PAPER ON DRUG ABUSE

Question

There have recently been a number of reports concerning the Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force white paper on drug abuse. These reports have indicated that the white paper would recommend decriminalization of marihuana and a restricted role for the U.S. Customs Service, among other things. What is the status of the white paper?

Answer

The Drug Review Task Force is in the final stages of its work, but has not yet forwarded its report to the President. We expect to receive it within two weeks.

As you know, the President directed the review because of his deep concern over the drug problem in America. Therefore, he is anxious to receive the report, and stands ready to act promptly and forcefully on its recommendations. Drug abuse is a serious national problem, and the President believes that we must enlist all the resources available in the Federal Government, in state and local governments, and in the private community to deal with it.

November 15, 1974

SUBJECT:

PRESIDENT TO ASK
SHIFT ON MARIJUANA?

According to a story in this morning's Washington Post, the Ford Administration's chief drug abuse spokesman, Dr. Robert DuPont, is expected to call for decriminalization of private use of marijuana in a speech tonight.

Is the Administration going to change its policy on marijuana and does the President favor decriminalizing the private use of marijuana?

GUIDANCE: The Administration is not changing its policy on marijuana.

What is the President's policy on marijuana?

GUIDANCE: The President is opposed to the legalization of marijuana. However, he has indicated that the penalties for simple possession may have been somewhat too harsh in the past and he is pleased that over 35 states have now adopted our model statute on drugs, which looks at more realistic penalties.

Is DuPont at odds with the Administration in the speech he will deliver tonight?

GUIDANCE: I think we should not comment any further on a story that appeared this morning about a speech that has yet to be given. I suggest you listen to Dr. DuPont's speech this evening.

JGC

DRUG ABUSE: MARIHUANA

QUESTION:

The White Paper on Drug Abuse, which you have endorsed, calls for down-grading marihuana in Federal law enforcement and treatment efforts. Do you intend to recommend decriminalization of simple possession of marihuana, as has been done in several States?

ANSWER:

Some press reporting has misinterpreted the White Paper's statements concerning marihuana. While the White Paper suggests giving priority to heroin, amphetamines and barbiturates, it specifically states that this does not mean giving no attention to other drugs of abuse. It says that marihuana use "should be strongly discouraged as a matter of national policy," and recommends that vigorous law enforcement be aimed at major traffickers in all drugs, including marihuana.

This Administration does not support decriminalization of simple possession and use, although it does support reduced Federal penalties for simple possession. For example, we support the Criminal Justice Reform Act now before the Congress which reduces penalties to a maximum of 30 days.

While the Federal law is rarely used in the prosecution of simple possession cases, we are concerned that any abrupt change in it -- such as decriminalization -- would be misinterpreted by potential users and by other nations as a signal that the United States government no longer discourages marihuana use.

MARIJUANA

Q. Do you favor decriminalization of private use of marijuana?

A. No. There is no consensus among the experts whether marijuana is dangerous or not. Until we know whether it is safe, I would not recommend decriminalization.

* * *

Q. How does that square with the Domestic Council study you released?

A. The point of that study was not that some laws should be enforced but others should not. All the drug laws should be enforced. The point was that some drugs -- specifically hard drugs -- constitute a more obvious threat to society, and therefore the major thrust of our enforcement should be there.

Q. Bill Loeb has criticized your family for seeing indifference to the fact that Jack has tried marijuana. How do you respond to that?

A. I do not approve of Jack's having tried it. But I am glad that he was honest enough to admit it, and I am also glad that we have a close-knit family where questions like that can be talked out freely and with understanding.

- Q. Is the President aware of the charges of corruption in the Drug Enforcement Administration?
- A. The President's Office of Legal Counsel has been in contact with the Justice Department and is satisfied that the proper steps are being (have been or are being) taken to resolve these allegations.

(FYI: All other questions should be referred to the Justice Department or to the Drug Enforcement Administration. John Bartels the DEA Administrator has denied the charges, most of which have been previously investigated. The FBI is continuing to investigate and still has some open cases. However, questions should be directed to the Justice Department).

December 31, 1975

DRUG ABUSE: MEXICO

QUESTION:

What is being done about the problem of drugs from Mexico?

ANSWER:

Both the United States and Mexico are deeply concerned about the increasing flow of drugs across the Southwest border. In response, the Mexican government has recently begun a vastly expanded opium poppy eradication campaign -- in duration and geographic coverage and, for the first time, using chemicals to kill the poppy plant. We are supporting this effort with helicopters and other materiel.

In addition, I have directed the Domestic Council's Drug Abuse Task Force, which prepared the White Paper on Drug Abuse, to develop recommendations for improving our ability to deal with the problem on this side of the border. The Task Force has established a work group and plans to deliver detailed recommendations for my consideration by mid-February.

DRUG ABUSE: BUDGET

QUESTION:

You have indicated that, in your FY 1977 budget, you will request funds to implement all major recommendations contained in the White Paper on Drug Abuse. What specifically does this include?

ANSWER:

In line with White Paper recommendations, the budget I will submit in January will request additional funds for:

- 7,000 new community treatment slots;
- treatment demonstrations for abusers of amphetamines and barbiturates;
- a joint HEW/Labor program to increase employment opportunities for ex-addicts;
- strengthened regulatory and compliance activities to address the problem of diversion of amphetamines and barbiturates from licit production; and
- additional intelligence analysis to help target law enforcement resources.

In addition, existing resources are being retargeted to focus law enforcement efforts on high-level drug traffickers and to ensure that treatment is provided to those individuals suffering most from drug abuse. Other actions should ensure improved application of our vocational rehabilitation services to drug users, greater utilization of existing community mental health institutions for drug users, and increased interface between providers of treatment and criminal justice systems to assure that apprehended drug abusers receive treatment.

- Q. Jack Anderson's column this morning indicated that the IRS program against drug traffickers, called for in the President's April 27 Special Message on Drug Abuse, has been quietly aborted by the President and IRS Commissioner Alexander. Would you comment?
- A. It seems curious to me that Mr. Anderson could assert that the IRS narcotics traffickers' program was "aborted" when, on the same day and in the same newspaper, an article by a reporter who normally covers law enforcement stories indicated that considerable progress has been made in implementing the program. (THE WASHINGTON POST, p. A2, col. 1)

The fact is that the President has made his interest in this program very clear and he is following implementatopm progress closely. The IRS and the DEA have made important progress in establishing a responsible tax enforcement program aimed at high-level drug traffickers, but there is more to be done. Secretary Simon and Commissioner Alexander know this. As for the alleged conflict within Treasury about this program, that represents the kind of healthy debate necessary to design an effective program, both in terms of making cases against narcotics traffickers and in terms of ensuring that the tax laws are not abused.

The bottom line, I think, is that we are making progress but we've still got a ways to go in this area.

Drugs

POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

- Q. What about the charge that OMB turned down an IRS request for \$20.6 million to fund the program?
- A. You have to understand that it is almost standard practice for agencies to request supplemental appropriations when tasked with new responsibilities, because this is easier than making the internal management decisions necessary to fit new responsibilities into existing resources. The fact is that the IRS already has a budget of \$1.68 billion and more than 80,000 employees. The President believes this budget is adequate for all of IRS's current responsibilities, which include enforcement of the tax laws against drug traffickers. He has also make it clear that he expects the Commissioner to reallocate some existing resources to this high-priority area.

RDP
9-22-76

SEX AND POT STUDY

- Q. Why do you allow the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to support such senseless and worthless studies as the one under way at the University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale on the effect of pornographic movies and marijuana on sexual arousal?
- A. It is my understanding that this study is not fully under way and is pending additional review by the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and a go ahead signal from the Drug Enforcement Administration, which must also approve the use of marijuana and any scientific investigations. Although the application for support of this study already has been through all of the regularly approved peer review steps, the Secretary of HEW is now conducting a further review of its scientific merit and importance. He will decide what further action is appropriate after the review is completed.

Background

The grant application is from Dr. Harris Rubin, University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale, to study the effect of marijuana on sexual arousal about which there has been conflicting reports. The study will also shed additional light on the important scientific question of the effect of marijuana on blood levels of hormone testosterone which has a role in normal sexual development and functioning in humans. The investigator is a psychologist with good scientific credentials who has conducted similar studies on alcohol's effect on sexual arousal. The grant amount for this study would be \$62,000.

3/4/76
SCM

GUIDANCE ON SEX AND POT STUDY

Q: What do you think of H.E.W. giving money to the University of Southern Illinois to study the effect of marijuana and dirty movies on the sex drive of male students?

A: As I understand it, H.E.W.'s Secretary, David Mathews, is now reviewing the grant of \$62 thousand to Dr. Rubin for this study.

My own personal view is that taxpayers' money should not be spent for this purpose and I intend to inform the H.E.W. Secretary of my views on this matter.

Congress may block pot-se-

WASHINGTON
may block sex experiments at University if the Health, Education and Welfare Department doesn't, an Illinois legislator says.

Rep. Robert [D.] [Ill.] made the announcement. Dr. Robert DuPont, director of HEW's National Institute on Drug Abuse.

DuPont was testimony before a subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee.

"ON GOOD grounds you've got to turn this down. It's a gift to anyone who wants academic freedom," DuPont said. "If you don't do that, we'll take it to the committee table."

DuPont's agency is planning a project more than \$1 million in fee. The psychologist Dr. DuPont plans to spend two years studying the effect of marijuana on male sexual arousal.

Volunteers for the project are to be shown the effects of their reactions and their arousal levels are monitored.

LATE LAST YEAR the Department asked the project before the House. DuPont and his subject, Dr. Rubin, HEW officials plan to decide on a bill for HEW Secretary David Mathews.